

SPRING / SUMMER 2019

ISSUE 2

TimeOut

CROATIA

**YOUR
BUCKET
AND SPADE
LIST**



YOUR ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO CROATIA

INSIDE HUNDREDS OF REVIEWS • EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW
ABOUT LOŠINJ • EXPLORE CONTINENTAL CROATIA • 440 YEARS OF KARLOVAC



Discover the difference

Experience Amadria Park



With a tradition of hospitality service in the Adriatic since 1904, and still family-owned, Amadria Park is today well established in the leisure, travel and tourism industry, offering its guests the choice of 12 quality hotels with over 2,000 rooms, seven guest attractions,

40 bars and restaurants and four spa and wellness centres. Amadria Park is located in Opatija, Zagreb and Šibenik – three beautiful Croatian destinations enriched with an abundance of natural and cultural heritage.

Amadria Park prides itself on providing genuine Croatian hospitality, authentic gastronomy, excellent service levels and a distinct guest offer.

Amadria Park in Zagreb

Set in a prime position in the city centre, Amadria Park's heritage hotel Capital captures the very soul of Zagreb's culture. Only a minute to the main city square and access to the historic medieval districts, hotel Capital is the ideal base for exploring the Croatian capital, and for meeting and entertaining guests and visitors.

Zagreb, a city of culture and history, is filled with Viennese-style architecture after 300-plus years of Austro-Hungarian rule, a plentitude of green open spaces and botanic gardens, dozens of museums and galleries and innumerable cafes. As a former branch of Austrian Wiener Bank-Verein, Amadria Park Capital is itself a shining example of glamorous art deco styling and architecture, reflected both inside and out.

The cafe, restaurant and bar are geared for gastronomic entertainment and excellence; with a traditional Zagreb coffee experience and home-made cakes, regionally-influenced, quality cuisine, and premium, hand-crafted beverages, including the signature Capital cocktail.





Amadria Park in Opatija

In a fairy-tale like setting, six of the Amadria Park hotels, including two luxury 5-star properties, are located on the charming Opatija riviera amongst distinctly ornate Habsburg-influenced villas, and landmark, manicured botanic gardens. Surrounded by pristine

nature, from mountains and forest to sea and islands, the idyllic climate is perfectly suited to spending time outdoors, absorbing the natural sights and scents, enjoying leisurely walks or the many beaches of Kvarner Bay and the Opatija riviera. Two special attractions enhance the guest leisure and gastronomy experience: Royal

Beach – for relaxation in luxurious surrounds on the seafront, and Gastro World – a culinary journey of local provenance, with all kinds of locally-grown and locally-produced foods and wines.

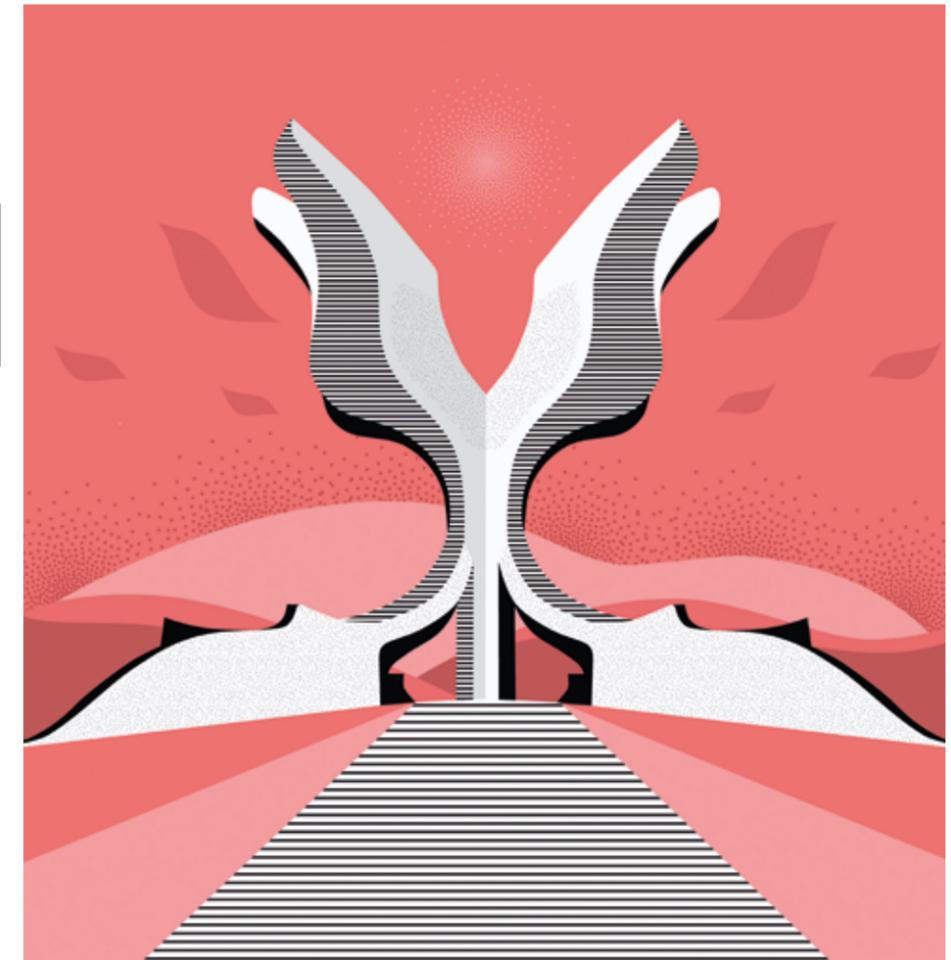


Inside

This season's *Time Out Croatia* in no time at all



↑
PAGE 86
440 YEARS OF KARLOVAC



Amadria Park in Šibenik

Set on its own peninsula on the island-dotted, sparkling Šibenik archipelago, Amadria Park offers five hotels, mostly 4-star properties, encircled by beaches and attractive Mediterranean gardens and vegetation, only seven kilometres from the historic Šibenik town centre. With its historic fortresses and two UNESCO sites, Šibenik is one of only a few cities in the world bestowed with this privilege.

The region is home to two national parks: the waterfalls of Krka, and the islands of the Kornati. The diverse hotels cater to families, lifestyle, couples and business travellers, each with its own restaurant, bar and outdoor swimming pools. On-site guest attractions include: Dalmatian Ethno Village – a showcase of regional gastronomy and heritage; the luxury day-time Adriatic-style En Vogue Beach Club; Aquapark Dalmatia – the only waterpark owned and managed by a Croatian

hotel group; the seaside gastronomy, shopping and entertainment precinct – Mediterranean Square; and, the pirate-themed, authentic Galija Explorer Ship for nearby sailing trips. Two well-equipped spa and wellness centres cater to relaxation, while a comprehensive on-site sports centre and bike rental service cater to active needs.



Contents

- 6 Croatia today
- 13 A love letter to Croatia
- 14 Events
- 24 Festival calendar
- 28 Things To Do
- 36 Shopping & Style
- 38 Eating
- 44 Drinking
- 52 Travel
- 56 Continental Croatia
- 69 Karlovac
- 99 Lošinj
- 131 Dubrovnik
- 160 Split
- 176 Brač
- 184 Zadar
- 188 Šibenik
- 192 Rijeka
- 198 Pula
- 204 Rovinj
- 208 Vrsar & Limski canal
- 212 Poreč
- 218 Buje & Brtonigla
- 224 Labin & Rabac
- 229 Zagreb
- 276 Bjelovar



Lošinj



Dubrovnik

↑
PAGE 32
CONCRETE DREAMS

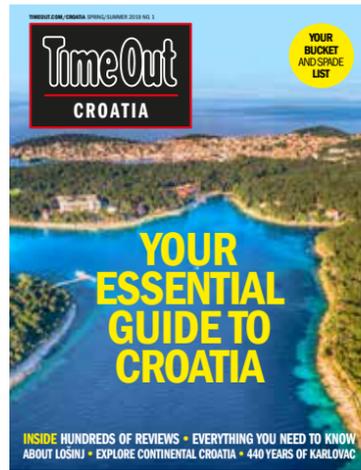
←
PAGE 118
SPOTLIGHT ON LOŠINJ

JOIN THE CONVERSATION

- facebook.com/timeoutcroatia
- instagram.com/timeoutcroatia
- timeoutcroatia
- Time Out Croatia
- timeout.com/croatia/news

Hello,
Croatia

Justin McDonnell Editor-in-chief
@justinmcdonnell



Time Out CROATIA

Published by TIME FOR CROATIA Ltd.,
64 North Row, 4th Floor,
London, W1K7DA, UK.

Editor-in-chief Justin McDonnell
Deputy editor Marc Rowlands
Operations manager Andrija Mičanović
Chief operating officer Robin Ivan Capar
Publisher Manica Pirc Orešković
Head of video Ashley Colburn

Contributors
Jonathan Bousfield, Judith Burns, Poljeon Cresswell, Jane Gilbert,
Ivor Kruljac, Morgan McDonnell, Mirna Pibernik.

Design
Art Director Enes Huseinčehajić
Creative Direction Enes Huseinčehajić, Justin McDonnell, Andrija Mičanović
Global Creative Director Tom Hislop

Annual magazine
Total run: 24,000
Printed edition (4,000), Digital copies (20,000)

Photo Credits
Croatia today: Goran Jakuš p6, Plitvice Holiday Resort p6, Robert Marić p6, Maistra.com p7, Flo-pictures p7, Croatia by numbers: All illustrations from tele52 p9, One Day in Zadar Maraska p10, Art of Raw p10, Tim Erti p10, xbrchx p10, Is Croatia safe: Istria Tourist Board p11, Lost in translation: sawwhisper p11, A Love Letter to Croatia: Zlatko Dukić PR p13, Events: ATP Pava Laguna Croatia Open Umag p14, Pula Film Festival p14, Motovun Film Festival p15, Pula Tourist Board p15, Diana Krall PR p15, Marko Šteković p16, Narodni muzej Zadar p16, Split Tourist Board p18, Gus Gus PR p19, Domagoj Blažević p22, Pop Up Summer Garden p22, Julien Duval p23, Festival Calendar: Derivat p24, Seasplash p24, Marko Lopez p25, Suncebeat p25, Antonio Hant Corallo/Elephant Studio p25, @CHAZZADNITT p26, Tim Bulting p26, The great Croatian road trip: Benas M p28-29, xbrchx p28, Roman Babakin p29, Mapa Mundi p30, alchen_x p30, Kate Jann p31, Janos Korom p31, Concrete dreams: All images from Inelida Ramović p32-35, Made in Croatia: Sheffi and Cherry p36, Bite Art p36, Chypka p37, Kesa p37, Forks of fancy: Doris Jakić i Lili Bašić p38, Foto Nomad p38, Travis White p39, Doris Jakić i Lili Bašić p39, Veronica Arevalo p39, The Croatian Menu: Christo Anestev p40-41, National Restaurant Konavoski Dvori p40, CSP p40, Azur p41, Nadezhda Prokudina p41, Hear in a bottle: All images from Hvar22 gni p42-43, Wine gone wild: Matej Jurčić p44, Frano Miloš p44, Frano Miloš p46, Frano Miloš p46, Frano Miloš p46-47, Pribay p46, Frano Miloš p47, Ten bottles to buy from the supermarket: Zlatan otok p48, Josip Matić/Real Grupa p48, Matšević p48, Inočki podnuni p48, Kutjevo p49, Arman Marjan p49, Korta Katarina p49, Galić p49, Grgić p49, Agrolaguna p49, Get down to Gruž: Mira Anđrić p52, Hrvoje Margarečić p52-53, Pervanovo - Kazbek Hotel p53, Kate Živković p52-53, Marko Marinković p53, Marko Marinković p53, Time Out's Croatia Hotlist: @johntittlemoustache/Ivan Brčić, Castle Hunting in Continental Croatia: Miroslav Vajčić p56, Miroslav Vajčić p57, Miroslav Vajčić p57, Branko Ostojić p57, Miroslav Vajčić p58, Branko Ostojić p58, Flammarion p58, Droninair p59, Flammarion p59, Mača p59, The great outdoors: Leonid Tit p60-61, Ilijaa p61, Piotr Krzyslak p62, Imun A?? p62, xbrchx p63, Terme Tuželj p63, Osijek Top 20: xbrchx p64-65, Pizzeria Lorca p65, Mike_68 p66-67, Maja Danica Pečanić p66, Antonio Matijević p67, Karlovac: Digitalni Tisak p69, Karlovac, the town where everyone has two birthdays: All images from Ivan fokusa p70-73, Events: Ivan Fokusa p74, Karlovac Tourist Board p74, Dubrovačke Jeline igre p75, S. Selman p75, Karlovac Tourist Board p76, Herbert August p78, Karlovac Tourist Board p78, The Karlovac grain boat: All images from Jasmina Ovetković - Žitna lađa p80-82, Something fishy: All images from Aquatika p84-85, Karlovac Top 20: Oliver Svob p86, Denis Stošić p87, Dinko Neskusil p87, Dinko Neskusil p87, Dinko Neskusil p89, Igor Cepurković p89, Karlovac Tourist Board p91, Restoran Kaharija p92, Silvijo Selman p93, Pod Švarčom p93, Restoran Kivaka p93, Su Su Gastro Pub p94, Restoran M90 p95, River pub p95, Hotel Korana-Sokolac p95, Bars and Cafes: Marica Benč p96, Pava's Bar p97, Hotel Florian & Godler p98, Lošinj: Lošinj Hotels and Villas p99, @johntittlemoustache/Ivan Brčić p100, Lošinj Hotels and Villas p102, Lošinj Hotels and Villas p104-105, Sea Change: All images from Lošinj Hotels & Villas p106-110, The Lošinj Apoyomenos: All images from Mirna Pibernik p112-115, Life's a beach: Aleksandar Gospić p116-117, @johntittlemoustache/Ivan Brčić p117, Lošinj Hotels & Villas p117, Lošinj Top 10: All images from Lošinj Hotels & Villas p118-119, Attractions: Mirna Pibernik p120, Restaurants: Lošinj Hotels & Villas p121-123, Campsites: Camp Bijar p124, Camp Baldarin p124, Camping Slatina p124, Hotels: Lošinj Hotels & Villas p125-129, Dubrovnik: Maria Michelle p131, Fish Restaurant Proto p132, Ijaka p132-133, Azur p133, jarmoluk p133, Copacabana Beach p134, Veronica Arevalo p134, neufal54 p136, Andrija Carli p136, War Photo Limited p137, Dubrovnik Summer Festival p137, Azur p138, Bistvo 49 p140, Foto Nomad p140, Nautika Restaurant p142, Foto Nomad p143, Restaurant Orsan p143, Restaurant & Bar Pariz p143, Oyster & Sushi Bar Beta p144, Pantani p145, Doris Jakić i Lili Bašić p146, Trattoria Carmen p147, Tuomas Lehtinen p148, Cogito Coffee p148, Mira Anđrić p148, Copacabana Beach p149, Copacabana Beach p150, Natural beauty: happywindow p152, Mirna Pibernik p152, Illographie p153, Alfio Sciseti p153, Mirna Pibernik p153, Hotel Bellevue Dubrovnik, Adriatic Luxury Hotels p154, Pervanovo - Kazbek Hotel p156, Sheraton Dubrovnik Riviera Hotel p158, Split: Split City Museum p159, Andrija Carli for Mestrovic Gallery p160, Tuomas Lehtinen p160, Brasserie on 7 p161, Uje Oil Bar p162, Ivana Ivan Bezmanović p162, Mestrovic Gallery p163, Split City Museum p163, Split City Museum p163, Brasserie on 7 p164, Nino Šerić p164, Kitchen 5 p166, Dicletan's Wine House p166, Ma.Toni p167, Mazggon p167, Ivan Ivanišević p168, Milan Sabić p169, Emil Škare p170, Koalicija udruga mladih p170, Stipe Surac p172, 101 Dalmatian Design Hotel p173, Cornaro Hotel p173, Hotel Luxe p174, Radiaaon Blue Resort & Spa p175, Hotel Split p175, Brač Top 20: xbrchx p176-177, Villa Giardino p176, Pawel Kazmierczak p177, Waterman Svetište Resort p178, Pawel Kazmierczak p178, Branko Ostojić p179, Off-grid luxury island retreat: All images from Ante Mandić / digitalvizija, Zadar: D. Lemgo p184, Tourist Board Zadar p184-185, xbrchx p185, Tim Erti p186-187, Famous Bar p186, Peter Škrlep p187, Šibenik Top 20: Tavern Pelegrini p188, Tourist Board Šibenik p188, Tourist Board Šibenik p189, Amadria Park p189-190, Etnoland Dalmati p189, Rijeka Top 20: Mirko Fotori p192-193, Damir Žižić p192, Renato Bulčić p196, Bistvo Momar p196, Marina Brčić p197, Pula Top 20: Tourist Board Pula p198, concept p198-199, Digital Artihill p199, Hotel Milan p200, National Park Birijuni p202, Gordano Celich p202, Rovinj Top 20: Batana Eco Museum p204, footoo p204-205, Maistra p205, rawpixel p205, Dalibor Ialajić p205, Maistra p206, Vrsar, Funtana & Linski Canal: Istria Tourist Board p208-209, photo-graphe p210, Montraker p211, Poreč Top 20: Istria Tourist Board p212-213, Aquacolors Aquapark p212, Tourist Board Poreč p213-215, Diving Center Poreč p215, Pava Laguna: All images from Pava Laguna p216-217, Buje & Brtonigla Top 20: Giuseppe Anello p218-219, San Rocco p218, Tourist Board Brtonigla p219, San Rocco p219, Tourist Board Brtonigla p219, The pleasure of luxury: All images from Hotel Casino Mulino p220-221, Labin & Rabac Top 20: Tourist Board Labin & Rabac p224-227, Valamar p227, Zagreb: Iijaa p229, Muserm of Broken Relationships p230, Marko Vrdoljak p230-231, Brokenships Bistro p231, Julien Duval p232, Marko Vrdoljak p232, Ella Pitr p233, Marko Vrdoljak p233, Zagreb Advent Run: Zagreb Advent Run/Run Croatia p234-235, Zlatko Zlatić p236, Marko Vrdoljak p236-237, Goran Vranic p238, Marko Vrdoljak p238, Museum of Contemporary Art p240, Marko Vrdoljak p241, Muserm of Illusions p241, 50 A Burger & Champagne Bar p242, Mirna Pibernik p242, Dean Duboković p243, Marija Laća p243, Karla Jurić p244, Didov san p245, Igor Tomljenović p245, Igor Sitar - Hand Dizajn Studio p246, Simun Situm p247, Rougemarin City 248, Savica Casual Urban Eatery p248, Zinfandel Esplanade p249, Submarine Burger p249, Cogito Coffee p250, Marko Marinković p251, Dežman Mira Bar p251, Johann Franck p252, Karibu Kaava p252, Dežman Mira Bar p253, Pod Zidom Bistvo & Wine Bar p254, The Garden Brewery p255, Tomislav Huh p255, Boogaloo p256, Ivan Buvinić p257, Tvornica kulture p257, Baggić p258, Jorge Fraganillo p259, Maria Store p260, Saša Sekoranja p262, Sapunoteka p263, Amadria Park p264, Hilton p266, Esplanade p266, Hostel Bureau p268, Hostel Swanky Mint p268, Hotel AS p270, Neven Vrbanić p272, Sheraton Zagreb Hotel p273, Radiochirurgia Zagreb: All images from Mirna Pibernik p274-275, Bjelovar County Top 10: Zvonimir Alešić p276, xbrchx p276-277.

We would like to thank our advertisers for their involvement.
However we would like to stress that they have no influence over editorial content.

Published under the authority and with the collaboration
of Time Out International Limited, London, UK.

The name and logo of Time Out are used under license from
Time Out Group Ltd, 77 Wicklow Street, London, England, WC1X 9JY, UK
+44 (0) 20 7813 3000, www.timeout.com

© Copyright Time Out Group Ltd 2019

While every effort and care has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information contained
in this publication, the publisher cannot accept responsibility for any errors it may contain. All
rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or
transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or
otherwise, without prior permission of Time Out Croatia.



LASER
CENTER



COSMETIC
SURGERY



DIGITAL
DERMATOSCOPY



BODY
SHAPING
CENTER



ANTI AGE
TREATMENTS



FACIAL
TREATMENTS

THE VIEW FROM YOU

See what people are Instagramming!



SHARE!

Show us your best Instagram shots using #timeoutcroatia

Your beauty destination
Contact us: +385 1 4610 225 • www.poliklinikabagatin.hr/eng



BAGATIN CLINIC
info@bagatin.hr
CROATIA

GREEN GOLD TOWER
Grada Vukovara 269a
10 000 Zagreb

DONJI GRAD
Frana Folnegovića 1c/1
10 000 Zagreb

DIOKLECIJAN HOTEL & RESIDENCE
Kranjčevićeva 45/1
21 000 Split

Croatia Today

Jonathan Bousfield takes a look at Croatia's place in the popular imagination.



ONE OF THE MOST memorable images of the year so far was the sight of Dubrovnik being burned to a crisp in the penultimate episode of a popular fantasy show. This disturbingly destructive piece of television fiction was almost like the CGI-assisted reenactment of an earlier catastrophe, the great Dubrovnik earthquake of 1667. This real-life event also left the city in ruins: Dubrovnik's post-tremor reconstruction produced the planned Mediterranean-Baroque town we know today.

The conflagration featured in Game of Thrones is by no means the first example of life being revisited by art. In 1717 English poet Alexander Pope published his *Monster of Ragusa* (Ragusa being the name by which Dubrovnik was formerly known), a satirical ballad that made fun of a sensationalist news-sheet report claiming that a giant had been seen stalking the Dalmatian countryside. Pope's comic giant terrorizes the townsfolk and berates them for their dissolute

and immoral ways, before farting a whole dragon out of its arse.

What all these corny dragon tales demonstrate is that places like Dubrovnik will always inspire fantastic stories – although there's always a danger that the fictional tales will have more impact on the visitor than the true story of the destination itself.

When it comes to real-life narratives, Croatia has had an extraordinary year. The Croatian football team's astounding run in



Plitvice Holiday Resort

the 2018 World Cup left kids all over the world enthralled by the skills of Modrić, Rakitić, Perišić and Mandžukić – and very often able to correctly pronounce their names. Clad in a replica shirt and somewhat un-diplomatically rooting for her own team, Croatian president Kolinda Grabar Kitarović became something of a global thing – although she continues to be a politically controversial figure at home. Barely six months after the footy, Croatia's male tennis team

won the Davis Cup, beating France in Lille. The capital Zagreb became a city of triumphant homecomings.

No doubt aided by Croatia's presence in global popular culture, the country's tourism boom has shown no signs of slowing down. Bold new hotels (such as the Hotel Park in Rovinj), glamping grounds (almost everywhere in Istria) and tree-house resorts (Plitvice) ensured that there was always something here for the international travel magazines to write

about. On the minus side, Croatia became associated with "overtourism", with cruise-ship visitors to Dubrovnik rendering the Old Town almost impossible to get in and out of during high season. It is tempting to think of the city's incineration in Game of Thrones as divine retribution for the local authorities' failure to turn the cruise ships away.

'No doubt aided by Croatia's presence in global popular culture, the country's tourism boom has shown no signs of slowing down'



Hotel Park, Rovinj

Helping to keep Croatia in the travel-media's eye is Rijeka's upcoming stint as European Capital of Culture, a status it will share with the Irish city of Galway throughout 2020. What makes Rijeka doubly important as some kind of cultural ambassador is the fact that it's very different from the more photographed, just-look-at-my-centuries-of-civilization cities like Dubrovnik, Split and Zadar. Demonstrating that there is more to local life than the glossy surface of the tourist brochure, post-industrial Rijeka displays the urban, edgy side of the Croatian coin.

For evidence that the Croatian Adriatic is undergoing huge infrastructural changes look no further than the huge pylons that can be seen emerging from the sea just north of the Bosnia-Herzegovinian enclave of Neum. These are the beginnings of the future Pelješac Bridge, a graceful 2.4km span which will carry the main southbound motorway from the mainland to the Pelješac peninsula, bypassing Neum in the process. Entrusted to the China Road and Bridge Corporation in 2018, this huge project will ultimately link up Dubrovnik to the rest of Croatia's highway network, and ensure that it's no longer necessary to travel through 19km of Bosnia-Herzegovina in order to get from one part of the country to another. Work on the bridge began in January this year, and is expected to be finished in 2022.

The Pelješac Bridge project formed the symbolic backdrop

to an international business summit held in Dubrovnik in April, when a high-level Chinese delegation led by prime-minister Li Keqiang pow-wowed with Croatian counterpart Andrej Plenković and representatives of fifteen other Central- and Eastern European states. One of the unforeseen outcomes of this meeting of East and East was the visit of Beijing businesswoman Jiang Yu to the northern Croatian village of Kumrovec, birthplace of erstwhile communist strongman Josip Broz Tito. Yu expressed a keen interest in Kumrovec's former Communist Party Political School, a semi-derelict hotel and congress centre that housed refugees

during the 1991-5 war and has stood largely unused ever since. Chinese real-estate firm Zhongya went on to buy the building for 14 million kuna (1.9 million Euro) in May, proposing to turn it into an upmarket hotel and Tito memorial centre. Coming to terms with the Tito epoch is something that mainstream Croatian museums have always found it difficult to do, wary of the political controversy that such attempts might invite. If the initiative comes from a distant investor, however, maybe the subject is easier to broach.

Back in Dubrovnik, a city whose old-school museums are significantly less exciting than the city's dramatic history would

lead you to expect, it has also been left to the private sector to come up with a tourist attraction that adequately sums up Tito, communism and Croatia's part in its rise and fall. Despite its fairground, roll-up-for-the-crazy-curiosities-of-communism title, the newly-opened Red History Museum does an admirable job of serving up the social history of Croatia during the its socialist, Yugoslav incarnation. With a collection largely sourced from public donations, it also reveals the family photos an childhood memories of those who grew up in the pre-1991 era. It's full of stories, in other words. And definitely no dragons.



King's Landing

CROATIA BY NUMBERS

Croatia is incredible and here's the math to prove it.

katalog
satova
2019.

HRVATSKO
IZDANJE
KATALOGA
SATOVA
900 modela
58 brandova
196 stranica

1244 islands		400 beaches		70 cities	
	10 UNESCO World Heritage sites		8 national parks		16 lakes
4.1 million population		18.4 million visitors in 2018		86 million overnight stays	
	6 Michelin stars		1575 wineries		300 wine regions
160 olive oil producers		15 kn (2 euro) the average price of beer		10 kn (1 euro) the average price of coffee	
	55 music festivals		1.27 million visitors to Dubrovnik		2760 hours of sun on Hvar
115 sunny days in a year		30000 expats in Croatia		Gained independence 25 June 1991 Joined the EU 1 July 2013	

ONE DAY IN...

Zadar

There seems to be no stopping Zadar. This formerly rather frumpy seaside town has attracted some of Croatia's most visionary initiatives: the Garden and its festival offshoots; landmark public installations such as the 'Sea Organ' and 'Greeting to the Sun'; and the Arsenal, an arts centre in a beautifully-restored Venetian armoury.



SHOP

MARASKA CHERRY LIQUOR

Zadar's signature drink is advertised all over town, splashes of cherry red embellishing uniform walls and bursting out of billboards. After olives and grapes maraschino cherries are the third largest crop in the region and they have gone into the commercial production of the sweet-yet-slightly-sour liqueur Maraska since the 1700s. Most cafés and bars will sell it, matured in special oak casks and poured from a particular type of bottle encased in hand-woven reed

→ Maraska.hr

EAT

KORNAT

Reasonable candidate for best restaurant in town. By the ferry port adjacent to the Q bar, the Kornat is classy enough to have a cloakroom, refined enough to have a superb selection of Croatian wines but relaxed enough to avoid giving a stuffy, formal dining experience. The bottles are on display around a bright, modern interior, its 20 tables ably manned by equally bright, fluent-English staff. Although prices are much as elsewhere in the town centre, the ingredients are not: truffles are used in sauces to garnish the stand-out monkfish, dry porcini mushrooms to help flavour the steak. Specialities include black risotto, angler fish and the chocolate cake. The set lunches (choose between a meat or fish main course) are a steal at 60kn.

→ Liburnska obala 6 (023 254 501, restaurant-kornat.hr)

ART OF RAW

Based at renowned The Garden Zadar, ArtofRaw is the only vegan and raw-food restaurant in Dalmatia. Darko's team creates the same kind of dishes as found at their sister restaurant in Ribnjak, Zagreb. A bar menu and main one divided into savoury and sweet feature snacks such as kale chips and banana crepes, as well as more substantial ones such as stuffed champignons, spring rolls and spaghetti with courgettes and dill. All is prepared from fresh ingredients and based on sustainable produce.

→ Bedemi Zadarskih Pobuna bb (091 164 1485, artofrawfood.com)



DRINK

THE GARDEN LOUNGE

The Garden centres around a vast panoramic terrace with private cabanas as well as low, comfortable white sofas, amid established trees and great views. By day, locals and tourists relax, play board games, read the papers and watch passing ships. By night there's a full musical agenda, piped through a state of the art sound system, accompanied by a modest menu from the vegan Art of Raw kitchen. The Garden's range of craft beer and handsomely made cocktails are the order of the day.

→ Liburnska obala 6 (023 250 631, thegarden.hr)

DO

ZADAR SEA ORGAN

Thirty-five organ pipes emit unworldly tones through holes bored into the smooth, new paving stones, their size and velocity determined by the waves of the sea. The eccentric 'Sea Organ', inaugurated in 2005, was designed by Nikola Bašić and built in nearby Murter. Come here after dark and you'll be greeted by a stunning light show following the rhythms of the 'Sea Organ' in a similarly unworldly display.



MOST GOOGLED

Is Croatia safe?

CROATIA HAS BEEN ranked 22 in a newly published list of the world's safest countries. The list weighed up three essential factors to compile the list; war and peace, personal security, and risk of natural disaster.

Croatia's high ranking is no surprise to the country's residents, whose streets are regarded as incredibly safe places despite not having as visible a police presence as in other European countries.

In Croatian villages, it is very common for people to not lock their front doors or even their cars. You can even see this in some of Croatia's major cities like Osijek, which is so crime free that it appears 90 percent of police time is spent on driving, bicycling and pedestrian infractions, the last two presumably frustrated by Osijek having Europe's slowest changing semafori (traffic lights).

Croatia's low risk of natural disasters helps its high ranking. The country's universal obsession with *papuče* (slippers) and elderly relatives who insist on closing windows helps to protect against Croatia's only real natural disaster waiting-to-happen, *propuh* (indoor draughts).



LOST IN TRANSLATION

FJAKA

Fjaka is more than a word, it's a philosophy. When the dog days of summer strike, then it's time to welcome *fjaka* (pronounced fy-ack-ah), the art of doing nothing. That's right, absolutely nothing. Not even scrolling on your phone or watching Netflix. Much to the amusement of Northern Croatians, *fjaka* is a distinctly Dalmatian phenomenon. A remote cousin of the Spanish siesta, it pertains to a meditative state brought about by doing nothing, when it's so hot outside you can barely move at all. Life grinds to a halt, and nothing seems quite as important anymore. So when it grows brutally hot outside, embrace *fjaka* - you'll thank us for it.



The power of indulgence.
Magic of nature.

www.ginhvar.com



HVAR22 – MAGICAL CRAFT GIN
FROM SUN, RAINWATER
& AROMATIC HERBS
OF MAGICAL ISLAND OF HVAR

The best ingredients carefully selected from the most beautiful Croatian island – sun, authentic aromatic herbs and precious rainwater make the unique Hvar22 gin, whose superb taste will seduce your palate at first taste



A Love Letter to Croatia



Zlatko Dalić

2018 proved to be an unforgettable year for the Croatian National Football team and their coach, Zlatko Dalić. He guided the team to the final of the World Cup, their greatest success in the tournament. The very last chance for a generation of legendary players like Luka Modrić, Ivan Rakitić, Mario Mandžukić, Ivan Perišić, Dejan Lovren and Domagoj Vida. For Zlatko Dalić and his players, it was the pinnacle of their careers.

Dalić started his career as a footballer in Livno before joining Hajduk Split in 1983. He moved to Vinkovci before playing overseas, returning to Croatia to end his time as a player at Varteks in Varaždin. At the same club, he began his tenure as a coach. He moved on to Rijeka, then Slaven Belupo before a successful stint in Saudi Arabia and the UAE. In 2017, a near crisis with the national team called him back to Croatia where, following a terrible streak, he was tasked with ensuring the team qualified for the 2018 World Cup. Qualify they did and the rest is history.

WRITING A LOVE LETTER,

I admit, isn't an easy task but it is beautiful. Especially if I address it to Croatia. It is my honour to pay tribute to this great country. It's why I am so happy that we brought Croatia to the finals in Russia and that we have been the best promoters of our country ever since. Croatia is full of incredible, honest, hard-working people who create an unforgettable character, full of natural beauty and historical heritage. I have travelled the length and breadth of Croatia and I have this feeling everywhere, which is why I am very happy to be able to put some of my experiences on paper.

I remember the first time I came to play football in Split as a boy, how bewitched I was by the beauty of Diocletian's Palace, the spirit of sportsmanship, and the calmness of local people, living at a pace of their own. Of course, prosciutto is a delicacy in itself (same as in Istria, but, I have to admit that I am bound to Dalmatia and Split by stronger memories and nostalgia). I have visited Varaždin often.

The former capital of Croatia, up until the tragic fire, charms all my senses with its beauty. Vid, with its beautiful baroque features, which I can hardly believe it has kept until today, in spite of all of the troubles it has endured. And as for the Zagorje region, I cannot find the words to describe its wonderful nature or incredible people.

Speaking of our former metropolis, it would be a sin not to mention

the current one – Zagreb. The centre. And not just a centre of politics, but of science, culture, parties, food, experiences – everything.

I am afraid that my memories of Vinkovci might not be as appealing to tourists. It is a pretty but not particularly well-known town in Slavonia, just as Slavonia itself is not often visited and remains abandoned. This is truly a shame, because its green fields, as well as

the piquant and delicious kulen, are things everyone should experience at least once in their lives. However, I am filled with hope at the revival of Lika and at seeing its potential come to light. More people are enjoying the rivers, such as Mrežnica or Krka (although Drava, on which I finally found true peace, lies closer to my heart) or Plitvice Lakes. The wonderful karst, mountains like Velebit. I understand though, people do prefer the sea, and I have enjoyed spending this summer on Pag, and the Adriatic is truly miraculous and clean. The beauty of the Croatian coast and islands from Istria, across Kvarner to Dalmatia and Dubrovnik, is simply, as one of our fan songs says, indescribable.

I have had a chance to travel but I have never seen so much diversity as in Croatia, all in such a small place. I am a family man and, once my work is done, I look forward to the peace and time spent with my family. But let me tell you, this is a country for young people too. Just ask my son Toni. He has been a DJ in popular Novalja, creating unforgettable parties for the big crowds. It is precisely this diversity, be it cultural, gastronomical or historical, that makes the country such a welcoming place. Truly, Croatia has something for everyone.

Zlatko Dalić (as told to Ivor Kruljac)

TO DO

The best events in Croatia this season

ISTRIA

Rabac Open Air Festival

Eleven weeks of street music, theatre, cinema, special events and open-air performances, most of them English-friendly. Visitors can take advantage of the free walks around Labin every Tuesday evening in summer, an English-speaking guide pointing out the historic sights as part of each 90-minute tour. At the Sundance Tribute Festival you'll be able to see some top tribute bands

playing the music of popular acts such as Joe Cocker, The Beatles, Amy Winehouse, Coldplay, ABBA, Zucchero, Queen and Rolling Stones
→ Various venues, Rabac (rabacopenair.com/en) Mid June-late Aug.

Poreč Open-Air Festival

A summer-long programme of events encompassing street entertainers, outdoor film screenings and live music on open-air stages occurring throughout the town.
→ Various venues, Poreč (porecopenair.com) June-Sept.

Rise Up Poreč

A three-day festival packed with pop stars and, this year particularly, huge DJs of the global electronic dance music scene. Argentinian mainstay Hernán Cattáneo appears on the first night, Dutch chart topper Don Diablo on the second and Jamaican megastar Sean Paul on the third.
→ Peškera bay, Poreč (riseupporec.com) July 5-7.

Labin Art Republic

Summer-long arts festival with local painters throwing open their atelier doors, and a feast of theatre and music in a variety of outdoor

spaces. The three-day Labin Jazz Festival, with free live music, forms part of this whole event.
→ Old Town, Labin (labin-art-republika.com) July-August.

Plava Laguna ATP Croatia Open Umag

Global tennis stars flock to the Croatia Open in Umag to battle it out under the sunny skies of the Stella Maris Tennis centre. Superstars such as Novak Djoković and Andy Murray have played here before and may do so again.
→ ATP Stadium Goran Ivanišević, Umag (croatiaopen.hr) July 12-21.

Pula Film Festival

Running since 1953, even before Cannes, the Pula Film Festival is partly held in the city's historic Roman amphitheatre, which transforms into the grandest of open-air cinemas for the opening night and the award ceremonies. The agenda includes Croatian and international films as well as a student programme, evening concerts and audience interaction with well-known personalities from the world of film.
→ Pula Arena, Kino Valli and various other venues, Pula (pulafilmfestival.hr) July 13-21.

Aida

A spectacular opera in a spectacular setting, Verdi's Egypt-based warble fest takes over Pula Arena for what looks like being an unforgettable night.
→ Arena, Pula (eventim.hr) July 25.



Plava Laguna ATP Croatia Open Umag

Ode to Joy

Beethoven's Fifth Symphony gets a run-out in the suitably magnificent surroundings of Pula's amphitheatre, performed by the orchestra and choir of the Croatian National Theatre in Rijeka.
→ Arena, Pula (eventim.hr) July 27.

Carmen

The stars of Rijeka opera perform Bizet's classic in Pula's Roman amphitheatre, with mezzosoprano Ivana Sribljan in the title role.
→ Arena, Pula (eventim.hr) August 1.

Róisín Murphy

Irish singer-songwriter and producer Róisín Murphy appears in Rovinj as part of the Rovinj Summer Music Festival. She first rose to prominence as one half of electronic duo Moloko, who scored worldwide hits with 'Sing It Back' and 'The Time Is Now'. She released her first solo album, 'Ruby Blue', in 2005 and has followed it with three subsequent albums, working with producers like Matthew Herbert and Seiji. With a haunting, compelling voice, her inimitable sound is definitely one worth experiencing live.
→ Stara tvornica duhana - Old Tobacco Factory, Rovinj (eventim.hr) August 2.

Dubioza Kolektiv

Bosnian stars Dubioza Kolektiv combine hip hop, dub, ska, reggae, rock, punk and electronic music influences which really come to life in the live arena. Singing in multiple tongues, the band have toured in many different countries where their explosive live show and warm interaction with audiences has broken

through anything as trivial as language barriers.
→ Arena, Pula (eventim.hr) August 10.

Morcheeba

Following a hit performance at the 2019 Zagreb Beer Fest, 20-year-old UK trip-hop band Morcheeba return to Croatia, this time to perform as part of the Rovinj Summer Music Festival. The band combine various musical elements including hip hop and indie, are still fronted by founding members Ross Godfrey and Skye Edwards and released their latest album 'Blaze Away' in 2018.
→ Stara tvornica duhana - Old Tobacco Factory, Rovinj (eventim.hr) August 17.

Motovun Film Festival

An international film festival and five-day party all in one, Motovun Film Festival is held in the beautiful Venetian town of Motovun, 270m above sea level. International and ex-Yu films are screened at a number of pop-up cinemas, both

indoors and out; screenings take place from early morning until around 2am. Directors from around the world compete for the prestigious Propeler Award, and interactive events take place for those wanting a little in-depth insight.
→ Various venues, Motovun (motovunfilmfestival.com) August 23-27.

Visualia

Light installations, art works and illuminated performance art throughout the city, with both the Roman Arena and the shipyard Lighting Giants playing spectacular roles.
→ Pula (facebook.com/VisualiaFestival) Sept 19-21.

Pulska Xica

A highly enjoyable fun run that takes place at night, with a circuit that starts at the Arena, runs past the lighting giants, and through the Zerostrasse tunnels.
→ Pula (pulainfo.hr) Sept 21.

RIJEKA AND OPATIJA

Diana Krall

Canadian pianist and vocalist Diana Krall is one of the great interpreters of the American Jazz songbook, and is also a major songwriter in her own right. Having notched up 15 million album sales and three Grammy awards in an illustrious career, she's a spellbinding live performer. This rare chance to see Krall on Croatian soil will for many be the indisputable musical highlight of 2019.
→ Summer Stage, Opatija (eventim.hr) July 16.

Francisco de Pajaro: Art is Trash

Visitors to Rijeka can't fail to notice the explosion of street art adding colour and different perspectives to the urban environment. Contributing to this expression in 2019 will be Spanish artist Francisco de Pajaro who makes sculptures from discarded items. The Barcelona-born artist uses old mattresses, boxes, food containers and bin bags to create playful creations which find the beauty in everyday, discarded items. His ongoing series of street art interventions is titled 'Art is Trash' and he will be in residence in the city for a two-week period.
→ Various venues, Rijeka (rijeka2020.eu) June 26 - July 10



Motovun Film Festival



Pula Film Festival



Visualia



Diana Krall

Things to Do

Sailor Sweet & Salt Festival

Adventurous music festival offering shrewdly curated alternative rock and pop. This year's event features legendary Croatian singer Josipa Lisac headlining an evening of live performance, with contemporary jazz funk band Chui in support as well as the couple who curate the event, Let 3's Damir Martinović and his wife Ivanka Mazurkijević, who perform as Mr. Lee & IvaneSky. → Various venues, Rijeka (rijeka2020.eu) July 26.

Porto Etno

Now in its third year, Porto Etno is a festival of food and music that focuses on the ethnic minorities of Rijeka, but also deals with wider themes of migration and shifting ideas of homeland. Very much an event for all the family, it's a fantastic opportunity to enjoy the culinary traditions of Rijeka's various communities. The live music programme involves local folklore societies and international stars of world music. This year, Czech avant-folk violinist and singer Iva Bittová will perform a collaborative programme with local traditional musicians in the Croatian National Theatre. There will also be late evening music sessions featuring French ethno-electro DJs Acid Arab, Istanbul psychedelic ethno band BaBa ZuLa, famed Balkan brass band Boban Marković Orchestra, Award-winning Franco-Moroccan singer Hindi Zahra and innovative Montenegrin musician Rambo Amadeus and his Zappa-esque jazz funk band.

→ Karolina pier, Ex Port Delta & other venues, Rijeka (rijeka2020.eu) Sept 6-9.



Rijeka Carnival

D'Annunzio's Holocaust

The Italian poet and proto-fascist Gabriele D'Annunzio called Rijeka the 'City of the Holocaust' during his brief rule of the city from September 1919 to January 1921. The word Holocaust meant something rather different to D'Annunzio than it does now: he pictured the city as an eternally suffering woman, saved from further torment by the boldness and gallantry of his inspired leadership. This exhibition, set to open on the centenary of D'Annunzio's march on the city, will focus on the fate of women in Rijeka during the D'Annunzio period – both his supporters and those who struggled to survive a

tumultuous period. Exhibits will be set out in the White Salon of the former Governor's Palace, where D'Annunzio once held court. → Maritime and History Museum, Rijeka (ppmhp.hr) from Sept 12.

Rijeka International Carnival Parade

Croatia's biggest carnival culminates in a colourful procession of thousands, in costume and in masks, some of whom are the traditional, hairy and scary zvončari. Subsequent celebrations last well into the night, at stalls and tents set up around the canal and throughout the city centre and its bars. Two weeks before Shrove Tuesday, on the Saturday lunchtime, a Children's Parade also runs through the streets of Rijeka. → Rijeka (rijecki-karneval) February 23.

NORTHERN DALMATIA

International Childrens Festival

Suitable for both children and adults, this fortnight of fun contains educational workshops, games, ensemble activities and much more. Children from all over the world are welcomed for the duration and will take over

the city with their creativity and imaginations.

→ Various venues, Šibenik (mdf-sibenik.com) June 16 - 30.

Salvador Dali: Surrealist Worlds

The most-famous artist associated with Surrealism, to many, Catalan Salvador Dali's inexplicable, melting images and lobsters on old-fashioned telephones pretty much define that revolutionary art movement. 200 of his sheets, sculptures, tapestries and reliefs on ceramics, glass, sofas and other forms will be on display at this summer-long exhibition, which is expected to draw huge numbers.

→ Rector's Palace, Poljana Šime Budinića, Zadar (nmz.hr) Jun 1 - Oct 15.

The 59th Musical Evenings in St Donat

Taking place in Zadar's Church of St Donatus, this longstanding celebration of music is so popular that it has grown out of its confines in the church and some events now take part in several venues throughout the city. The month-long event will welcome numerous local ensembles and solo artists, plus several international contributors. The sounds of chamber music, performed within the acoustically rich and superbly ambient setting of the church is an experience not easily forgotten

→ Church of St Donatus and various venues, Zadar (donat-festival.com) Jul 9 - Aug 8.



Salvador Dali: Surrealist Worlds

ZAGREB ADVENT RUN

Have fun at Advent Run!

Put on your costume and race through Europe's best Advent fair!

We'll be back in December 2019 - entries opening soon!

DECEMBER 8th, 2019.



ZAGREB ADVENT RUN

RUN CROATIA

mpr+

Follow us



Full Moon Festival

The full moon in high summer marks the occurrence of this three day festival, steeped in folklore, music and tradition. The Riva is lit by torchlight, giving a timeless ambience to the nighttime fish market and gastro-offers. Fresh tuna, sardines and shellfish can be bought straight from the boat, with dried meats, cheeses, traditional dishes and drinks available from vendors at the side. Music and dancers in traditional costume at times accompany proceedings.
→ Riva, Obala kralja Petra Krešimira IV, Zadar (facebook.com/LikeZadar) Jul 11 - 13

Tunua - Kali Fisherman's Festival

People visiting all parts of island Ugljan gather in the shoreline town of Kali for this event, which celebrates the work and traditions of the island's fishing fleet and, most importantly of all, their catch. By day, events like the famous parade of fishing boats occur, but the main festivities occur by night, drawing large amounts of young people and families down to the waterside to eat and drink alfresco, the experience soundtrack by lively local bands.
→ Various venues, Kali (kali.hr) Jul 18 - 20

Šokolijada

Though the region is rather more famous to visitors for its seafood, the town of Nin has an ancient tradition for drying and preserving meat, which is celebrated at this one day event. Cured bacon, smoked, salted and dry aged hams plus local sausages are all on offer here, with locals competing for the best results with their secret marinading, spicing and smoking methods.
→ Various venues, Nin (nin.hr) Jul 21

Zadar Jazz & Blues Festival

A well-liked festival of jazz and blues music, taking place on the lovely open-air terrace of the glass museum, which draws a nice crowd and international performers. This year there's even more of an international feel as Cuban band Vocal Sampling bring a sense of salsa and a taste of the tropical to the first night's proceedings. On the second night, Joseph Bowie, a New York musician renowned for his work with avant-garde funk band Defunkt appears with his more recent combo. The final night offers blues singer/songwriter and guitarist Eric Bibb and his band. His career stretches back all the

way til the early '70s.

→ The Museum of Ancient Glass, Poljana Zemaljskog odbora 1, Zadar (hmk-zadar.hr) Jul 24 - 26

Millenium Jump

Growing in popularity, fun and choreography every year, the Millenium Jump will see over 1500 people form a locked line before, on command, they all leap into the sea. If you don't fancy taking part, it's still an awesome spectacle to watch. The line of leapers this year will run from the Sea Organ all the way down to the Faculty of Humanities and Social Science.
→ Zadar (facebook.com/LikeZadar) Jul 27

Supertoon

A celebration of everything to do with the short animated film, it embraces children's cartoons, animated music videos and retrospectives of great animators of the past. There are prizes for the best films, ensuring an increasingly solid number of international entries.
→ Various venues, Šibenik (supertoofestival.com) July 22 - 27

The Festival of Salt

The Nin Salt Works is one of the last few places where salt is

extracted from the sea and still produced in the traditional way. The method is much kinder to the local flora and fauna, so one aspect of this celebration is to celebrate these natural surroundings supported by the Salt Works. Everything salt-related, from locally-made salt shakers, beauty products and giant salt crystals will also be on display, as are examples of the industry's long history in the town.
→ The Nin Salt Works Museum and Shop, Ilirska cesta 7, Nin (solananin.hr) Aug 2

Zadar Craft Beer Festival

With Croatia's craft beer scene having exploded in options over the last 10 years, there soon may well be more craft beer festivals in the country as there are craft beers. At five years old, this is one of the well recognised ones, offering a surprising variety of taste experiences from both Croatian brewers and international counterparts. Of course, there will be a decent music programme attached and plenty of carb-rich street food to help you soak up all that lovely beer.
→ The Riva, Obala kralja Petra Krešimira IV, Zadar (facebook.com/zdcbf) Sep 5 - 7

SPLIT AND ISLANDS

The Days of Diocletian

This is a celebration of the rich and vibrant history of the former Roman city Split, including parades, food and wine tastings, performances of all types and more, around the historic Roman palace that centrepieces the Old Town.
→ Various venues, Split (visitsplit.com) May 18 - Sept 21.

Art exhibitions: Basement Halls of Diocletian's Palace

Season-long exhibitions of contemporary art and installation organized by the Croatian Association of Visual Artists (HULU - Split) taking place in the atmospheric basements of this UNESCO's world heritage site. In 2019 seven site-specific exhibition projects will take place in Basement Halls of Diocletian's palace, with two projects also taking place in the open public space of the Riva in front of the palace.
→ Split (visitsplit.com). April - October.

Mediterranean Film Festival

This increasingly influential film festival has a strong regional focus and a growing cinephile following. It's a great opportunity to catch new features and short films from the Mediterranean area. Categories range from documentaries to experimental films, with short and long features. Afternoons are reserved for the city's smallest cinema, the old and colourful Cinematheque, another factor that has popularised this event, with many evening screenings taking place at the revived open-air cinema, in a small pine forest overlooking busy Bačvice beach, with DJ-led afterparties following.
→ Various venues, Split (fmfs.hr). June 13 - 22.

Sustipan's Night Dream

Sustipan has become known for an event which marks the beginning of the full summer season: Sustipan's Night Dream. This two-day music event with concerts is suited to the serenity of the park.
→ Sustipan Park, Split (facebook.com/SanSustipanskeNoci) July 12 - 13.

GusGus

Celebrated electro duo from Iceland follow up their phenomenally well-received concert in Šibenik from two years ago. In the last 20+ years, GusGus have produced over 10 studio albums of electronic, house music and trip hop influence with a fluid line-up of personnel, helmed by Daniel Ágúst Haraldsson and Birgir Þórarinnsson.
→ Rampart Cornaro, Split (entriro.hr) July 20.

Split Summer Festival

A mainly outdoors festival in the old town, with its own open air theatre featuring opera and plays, plus tons of entertainment for kids. Split's Old Town is the stage for a month of drama, opera, ballet and music performances at one of the oldest performing arts festivals in Croatia. Various venues, Split (splitsko-ljeto.hr) July 10 - Aug 14.

Sinjska Alka

For more than 300 years, a jousting tournament has taken place in Sinj, a small town in inland Dalmatia, half an hour from Split. Commemorating a historical battle against the Ottoman Empire, it's a popular event in which competitors wear historic costumes and target rings with their jousts. Even if jousting isn't your thing, the streets of Sinj will be filled with people and it's a fun day out.
→ Sinj (alka.hr). Aug 2 - 4.

Split Film Festival

SFF is one of the oldest film events in Croatia and is dedicated to more experimental works, with new video art, non-mainstream works by masters of full-length arthouse films. The only criteria is creativity.
→ Various venues, Split (splitfilmfestival.hr) Oct 4 - 12.



GusGus

Vanka regule

Since 1999, this has been a must for all extreme sports fans. Vanka regule is Dalmatian dialect (loosely translated as 'beyond routine') and this event is exactly that. It's a competition, but more important is the coming together of like-minded people looking for fun. Disciplines include climbing, freestyle cycling, slacklining, long-distance kayaking and stand-up canoeing. Brač is ideal for such activities, with sea, country roads, cliffs and mountains.
→ Sutivan, Brač island (vankaregule.com) late July.

Ultra Dalmatia Trail

The starting point will be in different places in the area between Split and Omiš. From there, extreme runners will take their routes in four different length categories - 20, 60, 110 and a punishing 165 kilometres along the scenic Dalmatian mountains. Hurry up with registrations: runners from around Europe are already signed up.
→ Omiš Riviera (dalmacijaultratrail.com) Oct 19 - 21.

SOUTHERN DALMATIA

Le Petit Festival du Théâtre

Held in the Lazareti complex just outside Dubrovnik and with fabulous views of the city and the isle of Lokrum, Le Petit Festival du Théâtre aims to explore various cultural concepts from poetry through to fashion and music using a variety of media.
→ Lazareti, Dubrovnik (lepetitfestival.com) June 14 - 17.

Midsummer Scene: Romeo and Juliet

A collaboration between the City of Dubrovnik, Dubrovnik Tourist Board and certain renowned events companies, Midsummer Scene is gaining status as a proper annual theatre festival. The play begins at 9.30 each evening. In case of rain, blocked guests can visit a play on another day. Ticket prices range from 200-350kn and the show should last just under three hours.
→ Fort Lovrijenac, Dubrovnik. (midsummer-scene.com) June 20 - July 4.

Kinookus Food Film Festival

Foodies and culture fans will love this food festival with a difference. Traditional local cuisines are featured over a four-day period, and sustainable, environmentally-friendly production promoted. Food documentaries are projected at various locations, and workshops for kids are also staged. There'll be a market where you can buy local produce too.
→ Various venues in Ston, Pelješac (kinookus.com.hr) June 28 - July 1.

Dubrovnik International Opera Festival

Named after Tino Pattiera, one of the world's most famous tenors in the 20th century, the International Operatic Aria Festival Hommage Tino Pattiera has a simple aim: to give a platform to virtuosic opera stars from Croatia and beyond, and to celebrate Dubrovnik's rich operatic tradition.
→ Various venues, Dubrovnik (croatia.hr/en-GB) Jun 28 - July 5.

Dubrovnik Summer Festival

Celebrating its 70th birthday this year, to say Dubrovnik's Summer Festival is something of an understatement. Once again, stunning performances will take place at venues around the city including, but not limited to, classical performances from prominent orchestras, ballet (including a visit by the prestigious Russian Mariinsky Theatre and a piece based on John Coltrane's 'A Love Supreme'), folklore, choral singing, plays from directors both local and foreign and award-winning films screened under the open sky. The theme for this special birthday edition is city myths.
→ Dubrovnik (dubrovnik-festival.hr) July 10 - Aug 25.



The Days of Diocletian

Things to Do

Revelin Festival

Two days of raving to house, techno and EDM in the atmospheric setting of Revelin Fortress. The lineup features a range of stellar DJs including Ofenbach, Miami Rockets & Vanillaz and Kungs.

→ Culture Club Revelin, Dubrovnik (clubrevelin.com) Aug 6 - Aug 8.

Korkyra Baroque Festival

The seventh Korkyra Baroque will showcase soloists and ensembles from Croatia and abroad, performing everything from their own original pieces to interpretations of traditional works. This successful festival also celebrates the island of Korčula and its culture.

→ Various venues, Korčula (korkybaroque.com) Sept 1 - 16.

International Late Summer Music Festival

Hot on the heels of the Dubrovnik Summer Festival, this event was launched by the Dubrovnik Symphony Orchestra in 2013. Under the watchful eye of musical director Christoph Campestrini (he's big in Austria), the festival comprises a programme of solo and orchestral performances, and film nights.

→ Various venues, Dubrovnik (dubrovnik-festival.hr) late summer.

Dubrovnik Film Festival

Under the unfortunate acronym of DUFF, October's Dubrovnik Film Festival is the latest attempt to stage a major cinematic event in this historic city. Major Hollywood stars are regular visitors here in summer, but this recently inaugurated four-dayer has been set up for young local amateur filmmakers. Behind the project is the Association for Media Culture Promotion.

→ Various venues, Dubrovnik (duff.kinematografi.org/en) October.

CONTINENTAL CROATIA

Zagreb Time Machine

Zagreb Time Machine is the umbrella term covering a series of happenings that take place every weekend from late-April until the first week in October. Period costumes and traditional music are the main ingredients in a sequence of street performances that take over various parts of the city. Key events include the Upper Town in History (Saturdays 5-8pm) when actors dressed in 19th century garb will act out scenes from the daily life of the capital in times



of yore; the Upper Town Musical Panorama (Saturday and Sunday 10am-noon), when similarly clad musicians well belt out traditional tunes; Promenade Concerts in Zrinjevac park (Saturdays 11am-1pm, Sundays 11am-noon), when waltzes and polkas will waft down from the old-school bandstand; and a Folklore Stage at various locations in the city centre (Saturdays 10am-noon, Sundays 11am-1pm) when singers in authentic folk costume will treat you to a performance of traditional songs. Also included under the Time Machine banner is the impressive pageantry of the Changing of the Guard of the Cravat Regiment (Saturdays and Sundays just before noon) with the regiment forming up on St Mark's Square in the Upper Town. They

then parade down the hill towards the main square.

→ Various locations, Zagreb (infozagreb.hr) April 27 - October 6.

Summer on Stross

This summer-long series of outdoor events offers an outstandingly varied programme of concerts, art-and-craft stalls and downright unusual happenings (the best mongrel dog show, finest wine-and-soda spritzer competition) in the lovely, leafy setting of the Upper Town's Strossmayer Promenade. There's usually a local band playing every night, and a couple of al-fresco bars at the scene make this a great place to hang out on balmy evenings.

→ Strossmayerovo šetalište, Zagreb (facebook.com/ljetonastrossu) May 24 - Sept 22.

Art Park

Established by a group of street artists, the Art Park is a piece of urban parkland that has been transformed into an urban chill-out area. New murals are painted every season, and there are frequent DJ parties to liven up the summer nights.

→ Ribnjak park, Zagreb (facebook.com/ArtParkZagreb) June - Sept.

Pop Up Summer Garden

The wooded hillside suburb of Tuškanac, just north of central Zagreb, is perfectly suited to this fresh new take on the idea of the al-fresco summer party. Food and drink stalls are set out on the access path to the Tuškanac Summer Stage open-air cinema, where there is also a summer programme of films. The Summer Garden is open every night, except Monday, from 5pm.

→ Tuškanac, Zagreb (popupgarden.org) June - Sept.



Zagreb Classic

This outdoor season of (free) classical concerts is really quite a treat, with top-class opera and orchestral concerts performed in a quite gorgeous park setting in the city centre. The plastic chairs are soon snapped up; bring a blanket and picnic on the grass.

→ Tomislavov trg, Zagreb (facebook.com/ZagrebClassic) July

The Courtyards

Some of the Upper Town's most beautiful back yards, many of which are not normally open to the public, are revealed for a ten-day festival of music, food and wine. Concerts and DJ events will liven up proceedings on most nights, although the main attraction is the opportunity to mingle and enjoy the ambience of some of Zagreb's most magical places.

→ Upper Town, Zagreb (dvorista.in) July 12 - 21.

International Folklore Festival

Annual event with a 53-year tradition featuring parades, concerts and dances by local and international folklore societies. This year's theme will be the age-old transport route between Zagreb and the Kvarner Gulf, taking in the traditional music and costumes of the communities along the route. Performances take place on the main square and elsewhere around town.

→ Various venues, Zagreb (msf.hr) July 17 - 21.

Špancirfest

One of Croatia's biggest urban parties, Špancirfest fills the streets of Varaždin for a week with acrobats, musicians and performers of every variety. There are three main stages

for evening gigs; most major Croatian rock-pop acts will perform here during the course of the week. There's a theatre stage, pitches for street performers and street musicians, and stands displaying local arts, crafts and gastronomy.

→ Various venues, Varaždin (spancirfest.com) late Aug.

Organ Vida

All-embracing festival of photography that serves as a superb showcase of work from around the globe - as well as offering a state-of-the-art snapshot of photography in Croatia. This year's event includes a special co-operation with renowned, Zagreb-based art collective Kontejner, famous for their hi-tech multimedia approach.

→ Various venues, Zagreb (ovfestival.org) Sept.

PIF (International Puppet Festival)

Founded in 1968, the festival is a celebration of the history of puppetry and its role in Croatian culture. There will be exhibitions and puppet-making workshops as well as performances.

→ Travno Cultural Centre, Zagreb (pif.hr) Sept 13 - 19.

Alexander Calder

American sculptor Calder (1898-1976) is one of the great names of modernism, known above all for mobile sculptures and the boldly abstract public monuments for squares and plazas across North America. This broad-based exhibition covers all aspects of his work, with mobiles, graphics, and photographs of many of his public works.

→ Art Pavilion, Zagreb (umjetnicki-paviljon.hr) Sept 25 - Jan 1 2020

Vukovar Film Festival

The Vukovar Film Festival comprises three categories, Feature, Short and Documentary, judged after open-air screenings down by the Danube - in fact, only entries from the Danubian region are admissible. There's good night life to be had after the projections, too.

→ Various venues, Vukovar (vukovarfilmfestival.com) late Aug.

Zagreb Film Festival

Of all the annual cultural events in the Croatian capital, it's the Zagreb Film Festival that is most likely to galvanise the locals into an advance-ticket-buying state of anticipation. Given that it is predominantly an art-film festival, promoting works by directors who have probably

never enjoyed anything remotely resembling a box-office hit, this is a real phenomenon. Day-time screenings of cinema classics and niche documentaries vying for attention with the main night-time programme of films in competition for the festival's Golden Pram awards.

→ Various venues, Zagreb (zff.hr) Oct/Nov.

Advent in Zagreb

Consistently voted the best Christmas market in Europe, Zagreb has ploughed its efforts into reviving this aspect of its Austro-Hungarian past. Stalls throughout the city centre and its beautifully decorated parks sell everything from craft toys to traditional sweets, fruit preserves, speciality biscuits and gingerbread hearts. The music programme features a month-long season of outdoor gigs and DJ high-jinks.

→ Various venues, Zagreb (adventzagreb.com) Late Nov-early Jan.

Snow Queen Trophy

International World Cup slalom events for men and women, on the north slopes of Sljeme just outside Zagreb. A big screen and mulled wine bars are set up on Zagreb's main square, bringing the event to the city centre.

→ Zagreb and Sljeme (snowqueentrophy.com) Jan.

Zagrebdox

This week-long event has quickly established itself as the main regional showcase for documentary films. Prizes are awarded in numerous categories, and the winning films are re-screened on the last day of the festival.

→ Kaptol Boutique Cinema, Zagreb (zagrebdox.net) Late Feb / Early Mar.

Things to Do

Festival of Lights

Spectacular annual festival transforming Zagreb's upper town with projections, light installations and video mapping, marking the city's springtime rebirth. Natural areas and historic buildings are given a new perspective with the art interventions and there are interactive pieces and performance-based shows too. The trail takes a good couple of hours to fully walk around, but you have five evenings in which to do so.

→ Various locations, Zagreb (infozagreb.hr) May 18 - 22.

NATIONWIDE EVENTS

Restaurant Week

This twice-yearly event sees top drawer restaurants slash their menu prices by half. Some of the country's best restaurants offer a three-course meal plus a glass of wine for 100 kn. Bargain!

→ Various venues in Croatia (tjedanrestorana.com) March and October.

Night of the Museums

The doors of museums and galleries in Croatia's major cities are thrown open free of charge for one night only. Most institutions take part, and frequently one-off exhibitions and concerts are organised especially for the event. Shuttle buses run between the main locations. Attracting big crowds, it can be a hugely enjoyable evening.

→ Various venues in Croatia (nocmuzeja.hr) Late Jan.



DISCOVER!

[timeout.com/croatia/things-to-do](https://www.timeout.com/croatia/things-to-do)

SEASON 19/20

OPERA

Giacomo Puccini
**MADAMA
BUTTERFLY**

Gaetano Donizetti
**LUCIA DI
LAMMERMOOR**

Ivo van Hove
DEATH IN VENICE

Jacques Offenbach
FANTASIO

BALLET

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky
— Vladimir Malakhov
THE NUTCRACKER

Jane Austen
— Leo Mujić
**PRIDE AND
PREJUDICE**

DRAMA

Slavoj Žižek
ANTIGONE

Anton Pavlovich Chekhov
— Bobo Jelčić
THREE SISTERS

Fyodor Mikhailovich Dostoevsky
THE IDIOT

Christopher Isherwood
— Ivor Martinić
**GOODBYE TO
BERLIN**

Haruki Murakami
— Frank Galati
**KAFKA ON
THE SHORE**

Falk Richter
I AM EUROPE

Ivan Penović
**DO YOU KNOW
WHO I AM?**



HRVATSKO
NARODNO
KAZALIŠTE
U ZAGREBU

www.hnk.hr

FESTIVAL CALENDAR

Regius Festival

Nine-year-old festival celebrating regional music and covering rap, ska, reggae, punk, dub, trance, dubstep, d'n'b and grime with free camping.

Line-up: Električni Orgazam, Eyesburn, Zoster, Sajsi MC, Stoka, Cold Snap and Them Moose Rush play live, plus DJs Daboo, Dreger Rofellos, Radio Los Santos, Babilonska, Škalja & Sokol
→ [Martinska, Šibenik \(regius-festival.com\)](#) July 12 - 13

Tabor Film Festival

A 17-year-old festival and competition of shorts films, held in the wonderful, medieval Veliki Tabor castle, north west of Zagreb, near the Slovenian border. There's a nice music programme attached
LINE-UP: Fujiya & Miyagi, Širom and The Marshmallow Notebooks.
→ [Veliki Tabor Castle \(taborfilmfestival.com\)](#) July 10 - 13

Ultra Europe Festival

Spectacular production values and the biggest names in EDM music at the European edition of this globally-recognised north American festival brand, held in



Derivat Festival

Croatia's second biggest city.

LINE-UP: David Guetta, Carl Cox, Swedish House Mafia, Adam Beyer, Afrojack, Alesso, Above and Beyond, Armin Van Buuren, Dubfire, Jamie Jones, Maceo Plex, Marco Carola, Richie Hawtin, DJ Snake and many more.
→ [Stadium Poljud, Split \(ultraeurope.com\)](#) July 12 - 14

Hospitality on the Beach

Croatia's only drum 'n' bass specific festival, run by London's Hospital Records, with beachside partying and boat trips by day and one of the world's best open-air clubs by night.
LINE-UP: DJ Marky, Mefjus, Andy C, Friction, S.P.Y., DJ Die, Fabio, Noisia, Alix Perez, Makoto and many more.
→ [The Garden Tisno \(hospitalrecords.com\)](#) July 11 - 15

Fresh Island

A distinctly different crowd and soundtrack - R&B and hip hop, in the smallest town on Hvar island.
LINE-UP: Harvo Jay, Porto Morto with more to be announced.
→ [Sućuraj, Hvar Island \(facebook.com/TamTamMusicFestival\)](#) July 21 - 28

Area 4

This festival will occupy the four biggest clubs (Aquarius, Kalypso, Noa and Papaya) to celebrate the music genres of trap, hip-hop, R'n'B, dubstep and house.
LINE-UP: Brohug, Gammer, Mike Cervello and more
→ [Zrće Beach, Pag Island \(area4festival.com\)](#) Jul 16 - 19

Derivat Festival

If you're in the region of Zadar, please do not let the language barrier dissuade you from catching Croatia's provocative rock legends Let 3 and fiery Belgrade trio Repetitor at this rock festival taking place in the outdoor area behind the city's public library. They are both brilliant bands.
LINE-UP: Let 3, Repetitor, more TBA.
→ [Zadar \(teatroverrdi.eu\)](#) July 19 - 20

Seasplash Festival

16-year-old beachside festival dedicated to soundsystem culture, with world-famous headliners from the genres of reggae, dub, drum 'n' bass and UK bass alongside the best regional contributors.

LINE-UP: Lee 'Scratch' Perry, Mad Professor, Scientist, Dub Pistols, Vibronics, Edo Maajka, Cause4Concern and many more
→ [Martinska, Šibenik \(facebook.com/seasplash.festival\)](#) Jul 18 - 21

Loveweek Festival

German-organised, seven day festival of EDM music that offers relaxing holiday options by day and crazy partying as the evening draws in.
LINE-UP: Alan Walker, Dennis Cruz, Felix Kröcher, Fritz Kalkbrenner, Helmo and many more.
→ [Zrće beach, Pag Island \(loveweekfestival.com\)](#) July 21 - 27

Tam Tam Music Festival

A wonderful music and art programme marks this extremely affordable, multiple-day festival in the smallest town on Hvar island.
LINE-UP: Harvo Jay, Porto Morto with more to be announced.
→ [Sućuraj, Hvar Island \(facebook.com/TamTamMusicFestival\)](#) July 21 - 28

Graffiti na Gradele

An eight-year-old international graffiti festival that also celebrates other aspects of hip hop culture. Street artists, graffiti writers, DJs, skaters, musicians and urban culture enthusiasts descend on this unlikely environment for a great party, leaving in their wake wonderful artworks on the walls of the town.
LINE-UP: Vojko Vrućina, Bad Copy, Krešo Bengalka, High5, 30 Zona, Bore Balboa and more.
→ [Bol, Brač Island \(facebook.com/GraffitiNaGradele\)](#) July 25 - 27

Magic Time Vinyl Festival

Held by the waterside in a nature reserve on the outskirts of Imotski city, though originally a local affair set up by a handful of vinyl record enthusiasts, this wonderful event has grown to become one of the largest and best homegrown music festivals happening in the Dalmatian hinterland. DJs and musicians from all over Dalmatia supply a wide mixture of old music exclusively from vinyl throughout the day and night, to a large crowd of all ages who snack on the nice food and beers available. Free camping available.
LINE-UP: TBA
→ [Perinuša, Imotski \(facebook.com/MagicTimeVinylFestival\)](#) July 26 - 28

SuncéBeat

Tenth anniversary of this much-loved utopia of soulful house, soul and disco, attended by a slightly older and very musically-savvy international audience.
LINE-UP: Kerri Chandler, David Morales, Mr. G, The Black Madonna, Kenny Dope, Tony Humphries, Joey Negro, Gilles Peterson, Soul Clap, Mr Scruff, Antal, Osunlade, Spen, Karizma, Henrik Schwarz, Marcellus Pittman and many more.
→ [The Garden Tisno \(suncebeat.com\)](#) July 24 - 31

Nox Festival

A newcomer to the domestic dance music festival scene, but one with a very hip, clued-up line-up that clearly aims ambitiously to engage with the visiting international audience. Two days of excellent house and techno music are guaranteed.
LINE-UP: Juan Atkins, Red Axes, Petar Dundov, Kenny Larkin, Beepolar, Coeus, Dee, DJ Jock, Forniva and Lawrence Klein.
→ [Martinska, Šibenik \(facebook.com/NoxFestival\)](#) August 2 - 3

Ferragosto Jam

One of Croatia's oldest, cheapest and best-loved homegrown music festivals. Thousands of youths descend on the man-made lake in Slavonia to camp under the stars for a weekend of great Croatian alternative, rock and hip-hop music.
LINE-UP: Goran Bare & Majke, Nipplepeople, Vojko Vrućina, Letu Štuke, Ischariotzcky, Sfumato, Brkovi, Mr. Lee & IvaneSky
→ [Orahovačko jezero, Orahovica \(ferragostojam.com\)](#) August 1 - 4



SuncéBeat

Fuliranje na moru

Four days of Croatian rock, alternative and hip-hop music in a beautiful festival resort that's usually reserved for big name international events and their audiences.
LINE-UP: Darko Rundek, Damir Urban, Detour, Massimo, Psihomodo Pop, Kuzma & Shaka Zulu, Goran Bare & Majke, Parni Valjak, Vojko Vrućina and more.
→ [The Garden Tisno \(facebook.com/Fuliranje\)](#) August 1 - 4

SuperUho Festival

The sixth edition of this festival and a treat for all jazz lovers, with an emphasis this year on more acoustic music and an intimate festival vibe. Longtime Tom Waits collaborator Marc Ribot makes his Croatian debut here.
LINE-UP: Marc Ribot, Art Brut, Colin Stetson, Shilpa Ray, Chui and The Fogsellers.
→ [Primošten \(facebook.com/SuperUho.Festival\)](#) August 2 - 4

MoDem Festival

Run by international collective Momento Demento based in Croatia, this visually stunning festival promotes psychedelic trance music sounds accompanied by experimental multimedia visuals and art. Striving to push the limits of technical production, the focus here is clearly not just the music.
LINE-UP: Arjun, Asimilon, Bionic, Buzz, Confo, Dr. Space and many more.
→ [Primišlje, Karlovac \(modemfestival.com\)](#) August 5 - 11

Membrain Festival

Titling themselves as 'Europe's heartiest underground bass culture festival', this festival aims to recreate a good old fashioned rave, with the exception that it's set on the relaxed Mediterranean coast and not in some dodgy, dangerous warehouse.
LINE-UP: Loxi, DLR, Pessimist, Overlook, Clarity, Ruffhouse and many more.
→ [Martinska, Šibenik \(membrainfestival.com\)](#) August 8 - 11



Sonus Festival

Defected Croatia

This legendary Ibiza party has swapped shores, defecting to the Adriatic coast for six solid days of house hedonism, with daytime beach sessions and boat parties and Barbarella's outdoor discotheque hosting heady after-hours clubbing throughout the night.
LINE-UP: Armand Van Helden, Claptone, Dennis Ferrer, Dimitri from Paris, Derrick Carter, Masters at Work, Eats Everything, Honey Dijon, Nightmares on Wax, Horse Meat Disco, MK, Purple Disco Machine, Roger Sanchez, Sam Divine, Todd Edwards, Todd Terry and many more.
→ [The Garden Tisno \(defected.com/croatia\)](#) August 8 - 13

Barrakud Croatia

Music, partying and travelling, this beachside festival has it all and lights up the summer of every rave fan. The music will be a mixture of main stage dance music sounds, house and techno.
LINE-UP: Paul Kalkbrenner, BowlLand, Ellen Allien, Marco Faraone, FJAAK and Gladis.
→ [Zrće Beach, Pag Island \(facebook.com/barrakudfestival\)](#) August 11 - 15

FreeMental Festival: Beta Edition

The beautiful sights of island Cres make for a wonderful and wild backdrop to this festival of psytrance, downtempo, chill, ambient and dub music, played across three separate music areas.
LINE-UP: TBA
→ [Tarej, Cres Island \(facebook.com/freementalfestival\)](#) August 15 - 18

Festivals

Sonus Festival

Internationally famous beachside festival featuring some of the best house, tech house and techno DJs in the world.

LINE-UP: Adriatique, Amelie Lens, Andrea Oliva, Apollonia, Ben Klock, Chris Liebing, Daniel Avery, Dax J, Henrik Schwarz, I Hate Models, Jamie Jones, Len Faki, Loco Dice, Maceo Plex, Marco Carola, Pan-Pot, Patrick Topping & Richy Ahmed, Ricardo Villalobos, Richie Hawtin, Rødhåd, Seth Troxler, Solomun, Sonja Moonear, Sven Väth and Tale Of Us

→ Zrće beach, Pag Island (facebook.com/sonusfestival) August 18 - 22



Outlook Festival

Dimensions Festival

Celebrating its final year at the beachside Fort Punta Christo and its final year of spectacular opening concerts at Pula Amphitheatre, ten-year-old Dimensions now stands as Croatia's leading festival of underground dance music.

LINE-UP: Andrew Weatherall, Awesome Tapes From Africa, Blawan, Call Super, Craig Richards, DàM-FunK, DBridge, DJ Bone, DJ Stingray, DMX Krew, DVS1, Gilles Peterson, Helena Hauff, Hesse Audio - Ben UFO, Pangaea, Pearson Sound, Hunee, Jane Fitz, Jeff Mills, Joy Orbison, Larry Heard aka Mr Fingers (live), Mala, Mr. Scruff, Nicolas Lutz, Nina Kraviz, Objekt, Octave One, Omar S, Peggy Gou, Petar

Dundov, Radioactive Man, Sadar Bahar, Saoirse, Shanti Celeste and many more.

→ Fort Punta Christo, Pula (dimensionsfestival.com) August 28 - September 1

Karlovac Beer Days

33th edition of this popular, local music, beer and food festival, featuring prominent Croatian rock acts, plus hip-hop, punk and trap musicians, and many other activities.

LINE-UP: Prljavo Kazalište, Psihomodo Pop, Vojko V, Pips, Chips & Videoclips, Svemirko, Mašinko, Kawasaki 3P, High5 and more.

→ Karlovac (visitkarlovac.hr) August 30 - September 3

Outlook Festival

The key annual event for the UK-derived bass music scene which incorporates UK garage, dubstep, hip-hop, dub, drum 'n' bass and reggae. Party all weekend by the beach at Fort Punta Christo, with a spectacular opening concert at Pula amphitheatre.

LINE-UP: Chase & Status, Calibre, Flava D, Bugzy Malone, Goldie, dBridge, Andy C, Shy FX, Gentleman's Dub Club, DJ Zinc, Grooverider, Channel One Soundsystem, Iration Steppas, Sister Nancy, LTJ Bukem, Ghetts, Kaba Pyramid, Holy Goof, Mala and many more.

→ Fort Punta Christo, Pula (outlookfestival.com) September 4 - 8

UFO - Urban Fest Osijek

Set near the catacombs, on the opposite side of the river Drava to Osijek's old town, Tvrdra, this outdoor festival offers great production values and well-known names from the Croatian music scene, plus DJ-led afterparties.

LINE-UP: TBA

→ Crown Fort, Osijek (facebook.com/urbanfestosijek) September 13 - 14

Goulash Disko

Totally crowdfunded and sponsor-free, Goulash Disko is a truly independent festival taking place by an idyllic beach, in the coastal town of Komiža, on Vis island. Expect a highly eclectic lineup, with all kinds of music from the global underground: Tropical grooves, organica, gypsy punk, Arab disco, swing folk, tribal techno and everything in between.

LINE-UP: TBA

→ Komiža, Vis island (goulashdisko.com) September 11 - 15

Dekmantel Selectors

Amsterdam's Dekmantel Festival is a legendary celebration of underground electronic music, and this sister event, Selectors, brings some of its deepest-digging DJs to the sun-drenched Dalmatian coast to play for a limited, 2000 or so lucky music-lovers.

LINE-UP: Albion, Andy Votel, Ben UFO, Donato Dozzy, Francois K, Colleen 'Cosmo' Murphy, Demdike Stare, John Gómez, Mark Seven, Objekt, Palms Trax, Vladimir Ivkovic, Young Marco and many more.

→ The Garden Tisno (dekmantelfestival.com) August 22 - 26



Dekmantel Selectors

RUN CROATIA

Our story goes back to 2015 when three dedicated athletes who share a passion for running got together and decided to start promoting events. It didn't take them long to find partners in Croatia and around the globe: race clubs, cities and towns, sponsors and others who trust in the benefits of a healthy and active lifestyle. We're friends with humanitarian organizations, sports clubs, local communities and entrepreneurs who believe sports activities can be enjoyed by everyone.

Today, Run Croatia organizes high-quality racing events in the region and around the world. Running is a constantly growing trend, with more than 50 million Europeans running regularly and spending about 9.6 billion Euros annually on their active pastime. In just a couple of years, we have grown into a movement that brings people together and can serve as an influential promotional platform for our partners.



OUR GOALS

We share common goals that benefit individuals and communities:

- promote Croatian tourism and individual destinations
- develop engaging content that prolongs the tourist season
- create a representative brand for Croatian tourism
- educate others about the benefits of a healthy lifestyle
- encourage social responsibility

Today after professionally organizing more than 35 race events, we can proudly say that we have transformed an idea into a national project dedicated to promoting Croatian cities and its beautiful nature worldwide. Through the positive energy of running we aim to enhance economic benefits regionally 365 days a year. Simultaneously, we are passionate about

raising health and wellbeing awareness - hoping to build a better and healthier society for the future generations.

The Run-friendly platform is a logical next step emphasizing the benefits for active people under one umbrella.

Our RunFriendly.world platform in Croatia includes:

Professional race event organisation and management • Run-friendly Hotel • Run-friendly Tourist Agency • Run-friendly Clinics • Run-friendly Carrier • Run-friendly Employer • Digital Community Platform - Web, Facebook, Instagram and YouTube • Mobile app - Glook.me - Users earn go:coins by moving (walking, running, cycling).

Our certification program can help with positioning companies on the market of health, well-being and sports tourism in a consistent way.

UPCOMING RACE PROGRAM

02.08. Lidl Glow Run Nerezine

28.09. Lidl Malinska Run

05.10. Lidl Run Fest Poreč

19.10. Lidl Vodice Run

08.12. Zagreb Advent Run



Things to Do

The great Croatian roadtrip



still-growing motorway network now taking the pressure off much of the magistrala, the route is re-discovering its reputation as one of Europe's greatest coastal odysseys.

We've chosen two large chunks of the magistrala for our list of Croatian road trips listed below, followed by three more recommendations for exhilarating and rewarding drives.

Rijeka to Zadar

220km

For twists, turns and superb maritime views, there are few roads in Europe that can match the magistrala, especially in this northern stretch. A sense of the otherworldly sets in early, with the hypnotically bleak and tawny island of Krk dominating the western horizon. The huddled town of Senj with its knoll-top Nehaj fortress provides a good place to take a breather before embarking on one of the magistrala's most challenging stretches, with 60km or more of bends and curves taking you beneath the rocky flanks of the Velebit range. Those in need of a short waterside detour should descend to the port of Jablanac, where you can park up before investigating the dazzlingly beautiful Zavrtnica cove. Marking the southeastern end of the Velebit mountains is the Paklenica National Park, with a choice of uphill hiking routes providing an excuse to stretch your legs. For a beach-combing alternative press on across the Maslenica bridge and take a detour north to Nin, where a famously long and sandy beach comes with views back towards the rugged coast you've just driven along. Zadar, and its famous sunsets, are just half an hour's drive further on.

Things to Do

Split to Dubrovnik

220km

Escaping from the urban sprawl of Split, the magistrala forges southeast through a string of settlements famed for their pensions and pebbly strands. The beach at Duće is the best of the lot, its fine dark shingle resembling a bed of brown sugar. Twisted gnarled mountains hover above Omiš, the first signs of a grizzled mountain chain that hovers menacingly above the road for the next 75km. From here the landscape is the stuff of superlatives, with scree slopes and rocks on one side and graceful silhouettes of Hvar and the Pelješac peninsula looming out to sea. The sweeping pebble beaches of the Makarska Riviera are busy with bathers in summer; the twin strands at Drvenik are slightly less commercialized than the rest and are great places from which to observe the Drvenik-Sučuraj ferry sashaying gracefully out into the blue. The mountains end suddenly to be replaced by a broad delta of orchardland reclaimed from the Neretva swamps. Providing the excuse for an inland detour is the award-winning Museum of Narona, a modern pavilion built above a 2nd-century Roman colony. The road runs through a short coastal strip belonging to Bosnia-Herzegovina (keep your passports handy) before pressing onwards to Dubrovnik, offering extraordinary views of knobby south-Dalmatian islands on the way. Arrival in Dubrovnik itself is spectacular, with the road crossing the Franjo Tudman suspension bridge across the fjord-like Ombla valley.

RUNNING FROM RIJEKA on the Kvarner Gulf to Karasovići on the border with Montenegro, Croatia's Jadranska magistrala or Adriatic Highway offers one of Europe's most unforgettable journeys.

Whether weaving its way round deeply indented bays or skirting scree-covered mountains, there's scarcely a single boring kilometre in its 650km length. The magistrala may frequently set your stomach a-churn with its endless twists and turns, but the views it offers are unforgettable, with the Adriatic's famously stark islands parading in stately procession before your eyes.

Travelling along the magistrala used to be a severe test of holiday-season nerves, with its columns of caravans, straggling towns with speed restrictions, and enough blind corners to make overtaking a near impossibility. With Croatia's



Zagreb to Split via the old road:

420km

If you're aiming to get to Split from the Croatian capital then the quickest and most obvious route is via the A1 motorway. It's an exhilarating ride through stunning scenery, but it's also just a motorway: great if you're addicted to the anti-glamour of service stations and picnic lay-bys, but otherwise a bit of a slog. A much better road-trip alternative is to follow the old road from Zagreb to Split, which winds its way memorably over the Croatian hills rather than simply tunneling through them. Stop-offs en route add up to a crash-course in Croatian landscape and history, beginning with the town of Karlovac and its freshwater aquarium and lively riverside scene. Heading south and uphill along national route 1, the road winds its way through a mixture of woodland and hillside pasture. The going can be slow, especially in summer, but there are plenty of roadside restaurants selling spit-roast meats and other traditional journey-breakers if its nearly lunchtime and you're getting impatient. Next major attraction is Slunj with its cascading cataracts, waterfalls and restaurants selling fresh trout. From here it's only a short drive to the grandiose scenery of the Plitvice National Park, whose celebrated lakes, waterfalls and boardwalk trails fully justify a stopover of 3-4 hours. Whether you have any more time for detours as the road forges across the bewitchingly arid terrain of the Adriatic interior is up to you. Suffice to say that the medieval fortress at Knin is another of those things that would be a real shame to miss.



Pelješac: Ston to Lovište

75Km

Taking a car to the Croatian islands can be expensive, and there's not always much in the way of road to travel once you get there. One classic Dalmatian journey that might almost count as an island is provided by the Pelješac peninsula, the rugged finger of land that juts into the Adriatic to the north of Dubrovnik. Be warned however that the peninsula is so famous for its food and drink that there is a constant danger of being waylaid en route. This is a relatively short road trip in terms of kilometrage, and should allow you plenty of time to enjoy the fat of the land.

The trail begins in Ston, a historic town of two halves which is joined together by one of the longest surviving defensive walls in

Europe. Ston is also famous for its oysters, served up with panache by several harbourside restaurants. From here the ridge-hugging route 414 climbs through vineyards and maquis, with splendid views of the mainland (to the north) and the island of Mljet (to the south) opening up on either side. If you're in need of a bit of beach-rest then consider a side-trip to Žuljana, a cove-hugging fishing village reached by a windy road. Back on the 414 the route winds its way through Potomje, a village famous for the profusion of wine cellars offering the chance to taste the peninsula's famously velvety Mali plavac red. The road descends dramatically towards Orebić, a historic port famous for its sweeping shingle beaches. The route continues along Pelješac's southern shore offering fine views of the nearby island of Korčula before climbing up onto wild, heath-covered uplands on the shoulder of Mount Sveti Ilija. Climax of the drive is the dreamy descent into Lovište, a beautifully calm bay-side settlement shrouded in greenery.



Slavonia and Srijem: Požega to Ilok

180Km

A lot of people journey into the heartlands of southeastern Croatia via the long straight Zagreb-Belgrade motorway, a drive that offers little except a mild sensation of boredom. You really need to swerve away from this route in order to enjoy the countryside at its captivating best. Frequently caricatured as being flat and featureless, the Croatian

southeast is in fact an undulating patchwork of cornfields, vineyards, forests and snoozy villages. Your best bet for a Slavonian road trip is to leave the autocesta at Slavonski Brod and head for the charming Baroque town of Požega, from where a minor road runs southeast along the low-lying limbs of wooded Papuk mountain. Passing through lush green tobacco plantations and villages draped in chains of drying red peppers, the road drops down into the Drava basin at Našice, where the English-style park of the Pejačević mansion is a great place for a breather. Continuing southeast towards

Habsburg-military quarter, the road passes the outdoor swimming pools of Bizovačke Toplice, a fantastic place for a refreshing summer dip. Beyond Osijek things get even more intriguing, with the road passing through the lush vineyards of Srijem before arriving at the previously war-scarred, but nowadays gorgeously restored town of Vukovar. Laze beside the river or sunbathe on sandy Ada island before pressing on to Ilok, last town on the Croatian side of the border, with its wine cellars and hilltop castle. Head for the Hotel Dunav on the Danube shore for a slap-up cauldron of fiš paprika, the fiery fish stew for which the region is famed.



Art & Culture



Podgarić

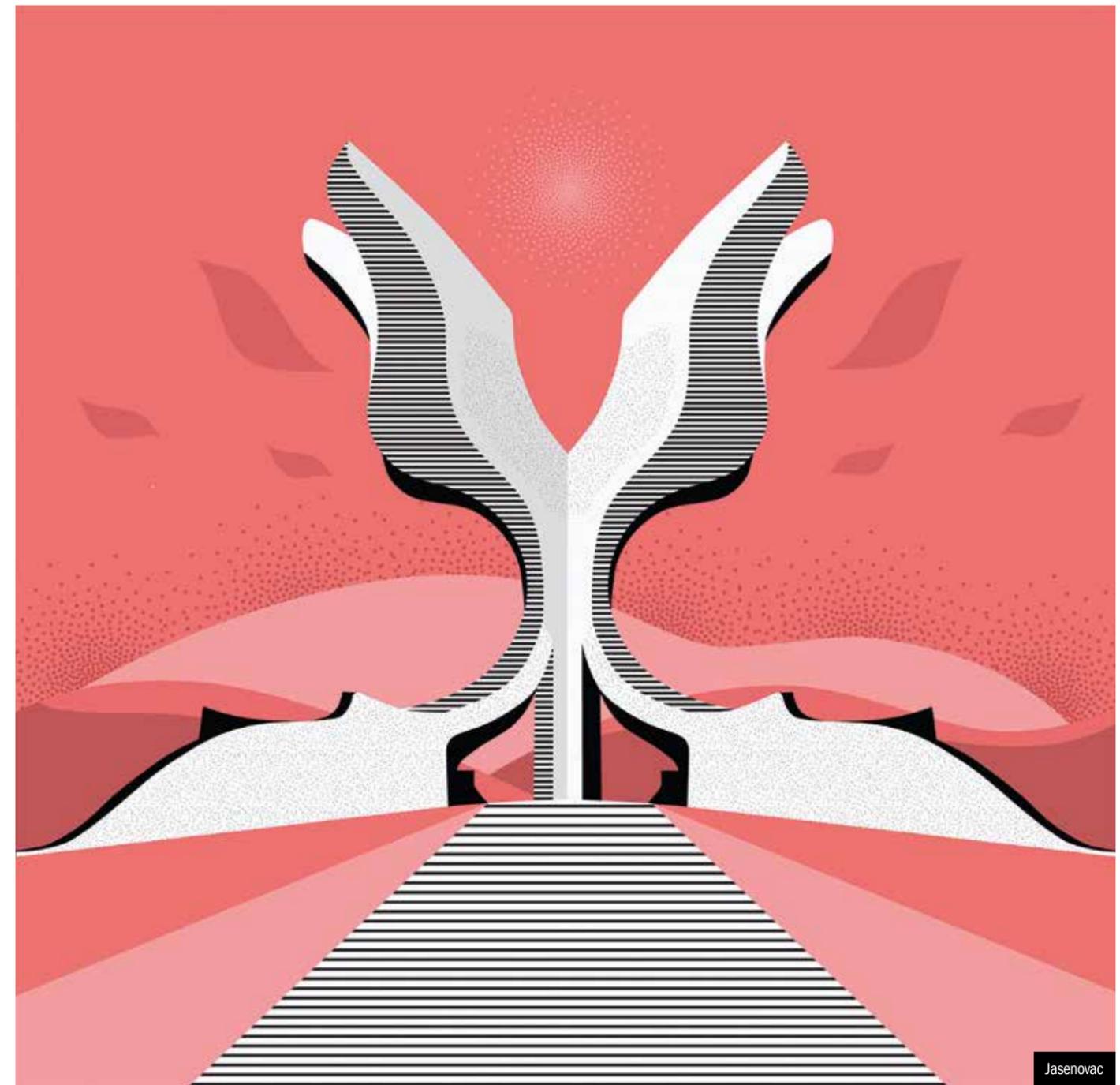
Concrete dreams

There's more to Adriatic modernism than meets the eye, argues Jonathan Bousfield

SO WHAT was this year's main cultural talking point among Croatia's chattering classes? The fact that Dubrovnik was burned to a crisp in *Game of Thrones*? Well actually no, it was the airing of Season Two of *Betonski spavači* (Slumbering Concrete), the TV documentary series that focuses on the modernist buildings erected in Croatia and ex-Yugoslavia during the communist period. Covering everything from abandoned hotels to ant-hill housing estates, it's a visually stunning exercise that places intelligent comment alongside interviews with people who worked or still live in these spaces. Acting as something as a human-scale antidote to the current internet craze for everything

brutal, grey, communist and ruined, it gently poked its audience with questions about the social system that bequeathed such a rich modernist heritage, and the need to reevaluate and preserve that heritage today.

Somehow concrete has never seemed so popular. It's impossible to surf your smartphone or open a travel magazine without being bombarded with pictures of angular grey buildings shot under a moody glowering sky, together with a catch-line suggesting that it's about time these misunderstood monoliths were accorded the love they deserve. Brutalism has become a buzz-word, applied somewhat over-enthusiastically to the buildings of Central and Eastern Europe as if any tourist's encounter



Jasenovac

with this region is bound to involve a significant degree of masochistic, abrasive pleasure.

The subject was thrown into sharp relief by last year's *Toward a Concrete Utopia: Architecture in Yugoslavia, 1948-1980* at New York's MOMA, a major exhibition that was attracting positive reviews pretty much everywhere. Covering housing estates, public buildings, hotels and war memorials all over the Yugoslav federation (and particularly in Croatia), it sets the architecture of the period in its social and political context, and provided a welcome corrective to the isn't-it-bizarre approach of all those pictorial blogs and social media posts.

In Croatia at least, it is not so much the brutality that was beautiful as the level of social

planning that went with it. Housing estates like Split-3 in Split, or the individual blocks of Novi Zagreb, were built with shops, kindergartens, health centres and open spaces included in the general plan. It's the way in which these modernist developments were an expression of social priorities that finds such a positive echo today.

Unlike the stately housing blocks of Split-3, the modernist hotels of Croatia's Adriatic coast were never intended for local citizens to actually sleep in. Their main purpose was to attract the hard currency of Western tourists, and they were mostly built in the kind of cool, Mediterranean style that would look good in a travel brochure. Many of these hotels ended up as classics of leisure architecture – one thinks in particular

of the stepped terraces and hanging gardens of Dubrovnik's Libertas or President hotels.

However the epoch also produced its eyesores: Boris Magaš's Haludovo Hotel on Krk is typical of the grey lumps that have become an obsession for fans of the brutal. However one can't avoid the suspicion that it owes much of its aura to the fact that it is currently derelict. Ruins make us sentimental, prone to overvaluing buildings that were never that good in the first place.

It's an argument that might be extended to the memorials built to commemorate the anti-fascist partisans of World War II, photographs of which are hurtling across the Internet like misshapen asteroids. Some of them are outstandingly ugly. Indeed one of the services performed

by exhibitions like the MOMA show is that the bad monuments are filtered out, leaving us to contemplate the masterpieces – Bogdan Bogdanović’s Stone Flower at Jasenovac in Croatia, for example, Dušan Džamonija’s winged fireball at Podgarić in Croatia, or the breathtaking Valley of the Heroes ensemble by Miodrag Živković and Ranko Radović in Tjentište in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

The tendency of some writers and bloggers to present these monuments as bizarre and otherworldly has been criticized by many in Croatia, who argue that their status as wacky visual clickbait has shorn them of their social and political context. However, most of these monuments were built deliberately as outlandish spectacles

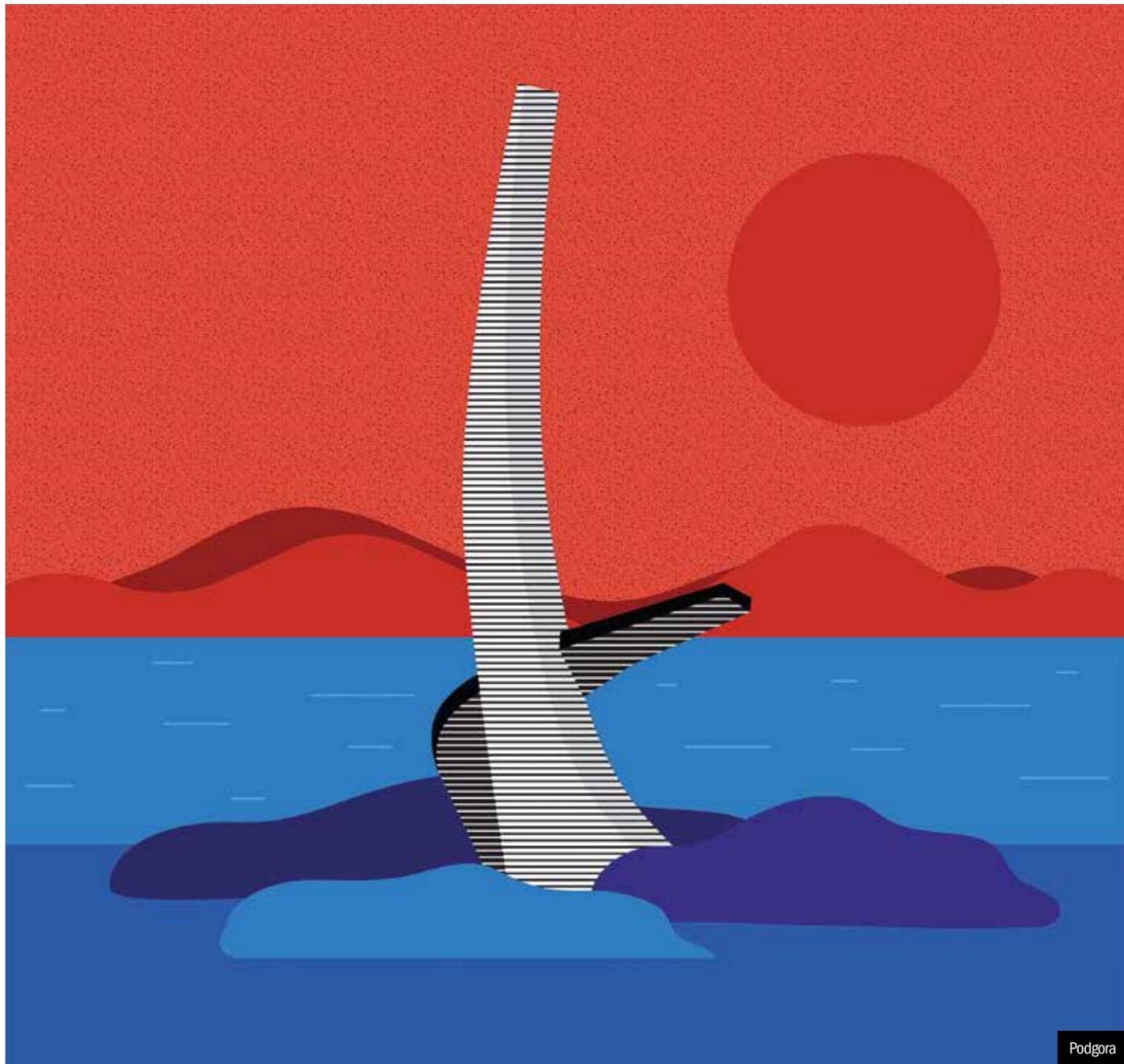
that would shock the viewer – otherwise they wouldn’t have used all that angular concrete.

However socialist modernism has also become a visual fetish. People write long essays for lifestyle magazines about the photographers who take pictures of grey tower blocks, abandoned monuments, or empty buildings, as if Central-Eastern Europe is some kind of exhibition. The region is described as the ‘post-communist space’, as if it is the relic of a previous civilization rather than a civilization in its own right; as if the experience of travelling anywhere between Split and Szczecin will deliver the same masochistic frisson of having survived an abrasive encounter with the gritty ‘East’.

Media representations of war memorials

and housing projects rely heavily on gritty photographs set against cloudy skies, as if to reinforce our preconceptions of former-communist Europe as something grey and overcast. Providing a startling contrast are local artist Imelda Ramović’s ravishingly beautiful graphics of partisan monuments, published in her 2017 book *U Spomen Spomenicima* (“In Memory of the Memorials”). These warm and heartening images rescue the monuments from the ruin fetishists and make them look radical, relevant and full of promise.

Indeed there are signs that Croatia is becoming increasingly proud of its modernist riches. The Split-3 housing estate is the subject of increasingly vocal affection among locals, a



Podgora



Perova Gora

city-defining landmark that is almost important as Diocletian’s Palace. The same city’s swoon-inducing Poljud Stadium, designed by Boris Magaš in 1979, is a globally-celebrated sporting classic. Ivan Vitić’s playfully Mondrianesque residential building on Laginjina ulica in Zagreb is an unashamed slab of primary colour that is anything but brutalist.

There is a huge number of derelict masterpieces too. Neither the mini-monoliths of Vitić’s Motel Trogir or the breathtaking circular sweep of Rikard Marasović’s Kravica children’s resort survived the fall of communism or the subsequent period of “transition”, a period which started over a quarter of a century ago never seems to end. Given the social and economic ambiguities of our present age, it’s no surprise that these

concrete semi-ruins now loom large in our imagination as symbols of lost promise, of a future carelessly mislaid.

“Our fascination with Sixties and Seventies modernism is an indirect critique of our current regression to a kind of pre-modernity” says novelist, newspaper columnist and proud Split resident Jurica Pavičić. “People see bad urbanism, bad neighbourhoods, politicians who favour private investors instead of public interest. They see kitsch monuments and a lowering of standards in visual taste, and they project their problems onto an imaginary, better past which was obviously not that perfect as they picture it, but certainly had different priorities.”

The true heartland of post-war brutalism was of course Great Britain, where hundreds of thousands of new homes were built in new

towns and inner-city estates throughout the Fifties and Sixties. Most of these exercises in megalomaniac planning were collaborations between left-wing city councils and right-wing national governments, just in case you were wondering about the ideological context. However these developments did not necessarily nurture the kind of community spirit their builders envisaged, and are nowadays only guardedly celebrated by keepers of the modernist flame.

Clearly our new-found nostalgia works better when placed in the ‘East’; our imaginations colonized by the idea of former-communist Europe as a fractured Atlantis struggling to be understood.

Shopping & Style

Made in Croatia

Add these beautiful Croatian products to your shopping list.



Sheriff & Cherry t-shirt

Look sharp in the sunshine and take home a memento classier than an 'I <3 Croatia' cap with these funky Sheriff & Cherry t-shirts. The brand's designers are world famous for their sunglasses worn by celebrities as diverse as Rihanna and Kiera Knightly. Drawing on retro influences, the tees are the height of modern beach chic.

→ sheriffandcherry.com

BiteArt

Bite Art do their best to make traditional pepper biscuits stick around for longer than most by adorning them with stunning miniature prints. The images come from a variety of handpicked local artists, including graffiti artist OKO, and they're all great. Presented in a sleekly designed box, they make for the perfect gift.

→ biteart.hr



Kesa

Beautiful handmade bags and backpacks, produced in the seaside city of Split, Kesa's products are not just attractive but sturdy and highly useable too. Designed in the sunshine, they are perfect for summer, but their water-repellent materials allow for year-round use wherever you are. The black rolltops are ideal for cycling or urban commutes.

→ etsy.com/uk/shop/KesaShop



Chypka

Born from the minds of two friends, a tattoo artist and a fashion designer, ultra-hip Zagreb brand Chypka make streetwear steeped in tradition. The prints of Pag lace are one of their tell-tale logo designs, the ancient embroidery transposed to a contemporary urban backdrop favoured by the skaters, hipsters and hip-hop enthusiasts of the Croatian capital.

→ chypka.com



Eating

Forks of fancy

Jonathan Bousfield looks at what's cooking in Croatia's kitchens

THE IRRESISTIBLE RISE of Croatian cuisine became a major media story almost a decade ago and has refused to go away, gaining added critical mass with each new restaurant opening. It was Anthony Bourdain who introduced international audiences to the sheer sexiness of Adriatic seafood by filming *No Reservations* here in 2011. Since then an army of gastro-scribblers has beaten a path to Croatia's shores, culminating in the arrival of the Michelin Guide's inspectors in 2017.

The Michelin effect has had a huge impact, unleashing reams of feel-good copy in the local press and raising public awareness of what's cooking in Croatia's kitchens. The newly-updated Michelin list that came out in 2019 recommended 63 Croatian restaurants, of which 5 were awarded with a star.

Croatia could always boast significant pockets of gastronomic excellence. Take Istria for example, a region long celebrated for a distinctive cuisine enhanced by locally sourced delicacies like truffles, oysters and asparagus; or the Opatija Riviera's love-affair with seafood and scampi. What has become evident in the last few years is the broadening-out of the good-food factor, and the emergence of a Croatia-wide generation of chefs eager to celebrate local tradition while embracing the latest global kitchen tricks at the same time.

The fact that culinary culture has moved up to a new level is particularly evident in Dubrovnik, a city previously known more for tourist-oriented catering than fine restaurants. Ten Dubrovnik eateries made it onto the Michelin list - by way of comparison the capital Zagreb has 14; while the gastronomically rich region of Istria has 16.

According to Spasel Krešić, chef at the Michelin-recommended

Bistro Tavulin, the listing was 'a big surprise, not something we had been expecting'. For Emir Uzunović, who brandishes the spoons together with Matko Prce at Stara Loza, getting listed in Michelin was 'a confirmation of all our efforts, which just makes us all the more determined to get better in the future.'

It's in cities like Dubrovnik that Croatia's transition from mass tourism to Mediterranean lifestyle destination has helped to raise the

gastronomic bar. A comfortably predictable culinary landscape of čevapi, grilled fish and ten kinds of schnitzel no longer fulfills increasingly sophisticated expectations.

Darko Perojević, co-owner of Dubrovnik's mould-breaking Asian-Adriatic fusion



Stara Loza



Tavulin



The Bar by Azur



Stara Loza

restaurant Azur, realized a decade ago that the culinary scene in Dubrovnik was in need of a shake-up. 'It was as if there was only one book of recipes circulating around town, and the places along Prijeko [a street famous for its tourist-oriented eateries] looked as if they were all different rooms of the same restaurant.'

'My brother and I had travelled' Darko continues, 'and we knew that there was more to eating than this.' Darko himself had seen all angles of the hospitality industry during a career that took him from washing dishes to managing chains, from Dubrovnik to the States and back again. His brother Vedran had started his culinary career by launching a restaurant in Zhuhai in southern China. He began by importing top chefs from the USA but when

things didn't work out he took to running the kitchen himself, developing an ingenious pan-Asian mash-up that has been his trademark cooking style ever since. 'My brother is a very creative person' Darko says. 'Somehow what he did clicked.'

Indeed one of the things that unites the present generation of Croatian chefs is the fact that they've all either travelled a lot or had the chance to study under chefs from outside the Croatian tradition, picking up skills that can then be redeployed on the domestic front. In winter, Adriatic chefs might do work-experience stints in big European restaurants, or spend some time cooking up new ideas at home. The off-season is certainly no time to take a rest.

Azur opened at a time when people were beginning to look at the Dubrovnik restaurant scene with fresh eyes. 'All of a sudden there was a younger generation of restaurant owners bringing in new ideas', says Darko.

French chef Gilles Camilleri raised the bar for Adriatic cuisine when he opened luxury haute-cuisine restaurant Gils in 2007. (Now

renamed 360degrees, the restaurant remains a top choice, while Gilles himself has moved on to open the equally well-received Gil's Little Bistro a few streets away.) Bota Šare took the locally-harvested oysters of Ston and applied the techniques of Japanese cuisine to produce some exquisite Asian-Adriatic fusion options.

According to Stara Loza's Emir Uzunović, Dubrovnik's restaurants had to start following world trends because the city itself was attracting a broader, more sophisticated audience. However Adriatic restaurateurs retained one unique advantage in the profusion of locally-sourced Mediterranean produce. 'We have a treasure trove of traditional ingredients at our disposal' Emir says. 'At Stara Loza we have put a lot of effort into finding small, specialized suppliers.'

The eagerness of restaurants to assemble a seriously creative kitchen team ensures that much more attention is paid to all courses, especially the sweets. As Anđela Jurić, pastry chef at Stara Loza explains, it's important to have desserts that match the quality of the mains.

For Croatia's contemporary chefs, the relationship with the ingredients has to be up close and personal. 'It's important to cook truthfully' says Spasel Krešić at Bistro Tavulin. 'Even čevapi are good if you're prepared to mince your own meat, grow your own onions and bake your own bread buns.'

Herein lies an important key to the onward march of new Croatian cuisine: the cult of fresh local food is cultivated more than ever before, but the attention to creative detail brought to bear on their preparation is boundless. The secret of success for Spasel Krešić is to 'do your shopping locally and use to the maximum the potential of the ingredients you already have.' According to Krešić Tavulin still gets most of its fruit and veg from the Dolac market just round the corner. 'When you've got the kind of ingredients that we have, there's no need for caviar'.



360

The Croatian menu

The classic Adriatic restaurant experience, explained by Marc Rowlands.

WELL USED TO the summer influx of international visitors, almost every restaurant you'll visit in Croatia will do their best to help you smoothly enjoy the experience. Most waiters will speak English at a decent level or better and restaurant menus will be in English, possibly also German and Italian. But Google Translate is not always wholly accurate. You do often see funny Croatian menu listings on social media, their innocent homemade direct translation attempts creating hilarious results. Pâté described as 'suffering from liver', shrimps described as 'smallpox' and a multitude of dishes described as being 'angry' rather than 'spicy' are just some of the classic examples.

Less easy to navigate are some of the cultural differences you may encounter. Lucky then, that you have Time Out at hand to guide you through the experience.

FOR STARTERS

Understandably, everybody wants to go with the flow when they're on holiday. But, a little preparation will improve your restaurant experience no end. And, if you're going to spend a couple of hours relaxing, savouring the moment and view, it's worth your while to do a little planning. Check out the restaurant online the day before you go. Can you see yourself sitting here having a good time? Yes? Then let's go!



Šopska salad



National Restaurant Konavoski Dvori



Peka



Azur

Book in advance. You won't be the only person drawn to one of Time Out's top-rated restaurants. Ensure your place by booking in advance. When you call the restaurant, be polite, of course and maybe ask the name of who you're speaking to. Ask if they will be working at the time of your visit. Any problems with your reservation when you arrive? Ask for them in person. Fallen in love with the sea view your restaurant offers? That's probably not the only kind of seating available. There might be tables out back with no view at all, save that of a semi naked neighbour dozing in a hammock. Be specific about where you want to sit.

THE MAIN COURSE

If you want to try out some special menu options, book 24 hours in advance. There are some Croatian specialties which, because of preparation and cooking time, require you to do so. Peka is one such option, a traditional tagine-style dish where meat and vegetables are cooked together atop a fire and under a metal bell, with

the lid covered in burning ashes. Pašticada, a unique Dalmatian offering is another, requiring not less than 24 hours preparation. In its traditional form, beef is pierced with herbs, spices, vegetables and bacon, then salted and marinated overnight in a vinegar base. The dish is then roasted with ingredients often including bacon, onions, parsley root, tomato, water and wine for anything up to five hours, with fruits such as prunes, plums or sometimes grapes added later, with these ingredients often blended into a sauce which accompanies the beef upon serving. It's notoriously difficult to find a brilliant, authentic version of the dish, but well worth trying to do so.

SOMETHING FISHY?

It'll be no surprise to read that one of the best things to eat by the coast is seafood. And, coastal Croatians are generally adamant that simplicity is the key to cooking it well. You'll rarely find fish flavoured with anything more than garlic,

olive oil, salt and lemon, with shellfish treated similarly, perhaps with the addition of chilli, wine and/or cream in the sauce. The most common fish (and arguably the best) you'll see on the menu are *Orada*, which is Sea Bream and *Brancin*, which is Sea Bass. Both of these fish are farmed in Adriatic waters and taste fantastic. Line or spear-caught wild examples are usually bigger, fuller-flavoured (because of their more varied diet)... and much more expensive!

The usual accompaniment to whole cooked fish is something called *blitva*. In English, this is sometimes known as mangold or the tongue-twisting mangelwurzel. Can we all agree to just simply call it chard, please? Well, actually, it's not so simple. Thriving even in dry, barren soils, chard is grown up and down Croatia's coast, but there's an almost ubiquitous method of preparation which involves combining the wilted leaves with cooked potato, olive oil, salt, pepper and possibly lemon juice. This green mush may appear underwhelming upon first introduction but, trust us, by the end of your holiday, it will be the meal's element you'll crave the most, even more so when you return home and have no idea how to make it.

A LITTLE BIT ON THE SIDE

If you really don't like the look of *blitva*, your alternate option will probably be once frozen French fries. Meh. But, look out for croquettes, known locally as *kroketi*. If they're freshly made rather than pre-bought, there's a good chance they'll be awesome.

Like all Slavic countries, the inhabitants of Croatia could quite happily survive on a diet of pig meat and cabbage. Despite them concocting several thousand different ways

in which to prepare and serve them, this can sometimes get a bit boring for visitors. Not only that, it can be a little troublesome for those with special dietary requirements; small seaside restaurants and taverns rarely have separate grills, so any vegetarian or vegan ordering grilled vegetables should be aware that their dish is especially tasty because it has meat residue on it. Sourcing halal and kosher foods will sometimes require significant research and possibly some travelling. As far as the cabbage goes, its common in its fermented form, *kiseli kupus* aka sauerkraut, especially in one of the most beloved national dishes, *sarma* (in which the leaves are filled with mixed meat and a little rice, served in a spicy tomato sauce). A very similar dish is *punjene paprike*, in which the sauce is removed and the cabbage substituted for peppers. The love of cabbage is so great though that it can be found raw, shredded, in most mixed/green salads and in this form is also commonly served alone, as the side dish, dressed simply with vinegar and salt (this will be a close second to *blitva* on your most-missed list once back home).

IT'S ALL GREEK TO ME

Another salad you should definitely try is *šopska* (pronounced *shopska*). This salad reputedly has Bulgarian roots but is commonplace across the Balkans. The nearest thing is a Greek salad, although the cheese used is softer, less sharp and often served shredded atop rather within the mix of vegetables, which usually include cucumber, peppers, tomato, onion and sometimes parsley and olives. Another common Greek comparison you'll find on the Croatian menu is *moussaka*. Beware; while Greek *moussaka* is a laboriously constructed affair, its rich, spicy, lamb or veal filling, strips of roasted aubergine, cheese and egg-rich topping sometimes requiring 24 hours prep time, it usually takes less than an hour to knock up the much more simplified Croatian version. They are incomparable dishes.

JUST DESSERTS

Fancy something sweet after your meal? Be forewarned that desserts are the achilles heel of many standard Croatian restaurants and taverns. Almost everything with cream as an ingredient will use the highly-processed UHT variety rather than fresh cream, cakes can be pretty but underwhelming in taste and very, very sweet (like store-bought chocolate in Croatia) and the ubiquitous *palačinke* (pancakes) are just served with Nutella with grated nuts optional.

The dessert Croatians are really, really good at is ice cream or gelato. The best versions are easily the equal of anything found in Italy.

TIPPING

Tip what you want or not at all. Croatia is not America. Tipping is not compulsory and you won't get dirty looks if you don't tip (this will only happen if you ask for your *blitva* to be served without potato). Ten percent of the bill is good, 20 percent extravagantly so. Be aware that your waiter probably works more hours in one day than you do in two back home and may be on minimum wage, which in Croatia allows you to buy around a packet of bacon and a cabbage to survive on for a week. Even if paying for your meal with a credit card, please make the effort to leave the tip in cash. Your actual server is much more likely to receive the tip, and receive it quicker, if you do this.

WATCH YOUR MANNERS

If your waiter doesn't say please and thank you at every moment you might expect him to, please be aware that he is not being rude.

Balkan people are much more direct in their language. That does not mean they are more simple, it just means they are more honest. Don't evaluate this aspect of their language negatively, instead re-evaluate your own! English-speaking people say please, thank you and other niceties so frequently that it sounds insincere and almost meaningless, like a convention of language, rather than genuine

gratitude or respect. You'll know if your waiter is being rude because they will be surly and serve you as though you are an inconvenience. Do not feel compelled to leave a tip if you experience bad service like this. Locals frequently consider such service to come from native Dalmatians and that the extremely hard working, happy and polite waiter you get is probably a seasonal worker from Slavonia in Eastern Croatia or even from Serbia. This is a gross generalisation, of course. A good way to check if your waiter is from Slavonia is to say

'kontash?' (do you get it?) after a specific menu instruction e.g. 'I would like no garlic with my fish, *kontash?*' If your waiter replies 'eh?', 'ah?' or *'shta?'* they are either Dalmatian or Bosnian. If they reply *'cha?'* then they're definitely Dalmatian. If they say *'ky'*, they're from Zagreb or north thereof. If he or she replies *'kontam!'* with a smile, they're from Slavonia or Bosnia and you should double the tip you were planning to leave for them.

'The usual accompaniment to whole cooked fish is called blitva. In English, this is sometimes known as mangold.'

Hvar in a bottle

300 days of sunshine, 50 days of island rain and hand-foraged juniper berries packed with essential oils go into every bottle of Hvar22 gin.



EVERY YEAR visitors flock to Croatia's famous shores, spending their hard earned holiday time swimming in crystal clear seas and basking under the guaranteed summer sun. Blessed with more sunny days than anywhere else in the country, island Hvar's almost 3000 hours of annual sunshine help produce the all natural ingredients that go into the unique

Hvar22 gins. Like your holiday in Croatia, Hvar22 gins have a taste not easily forgotten. At a small distillery on Hvar, Carić has for many years been taking advantage of the bounty produced on the natural paradise. After discovering his small distillery by accident, business partners Križan Pavić and Juraj Bartolić were astounded by the quality of Carić's gin and

have invested heavily in order to introduce the new range of Hvar22 gins to the world. Collecting rainwater in the time honoured island tradition, they blend some of the hundreds of natural herbs that grow on Hvar with orange and lemon peel from nearby island Vis to make the five distinct gins of Hvar22. Unusually using wine distillate which is produced from

four native Hvar grapes, after passing six times through a secret, all natural filtration process, Hvar22 gins are a sip so smooth they are as capable of winning over new admirers as they are the ultimate pleasure for gin connoisseurs. Hvar's golden juniper berries, which contain three times more essential oils than the kinds regularly used in gin production, are balanced

with herbs like coriander and rosemary, each handpicked, giving Hvar22's owners, Križan Pavić and Juraj Bartolić with their distiller Carić, the confidence to sign off each of their distinctive bottles by hand. The vivid aroma, taste and colour of Hvar22 gins are demanded by Croatia's very best cocktail makers, their unmissable bottles on

view behind the bar at some of the country's most exclusive hotels. With a production limited by their insistence on using all natural, all locally grown ingredients, be sure to get hold of a bottle of Hvar22 gin to take home with you. Hvar22 gins make the perfect gift for your dearest friends or even just for yourself, a wholly unique drink from an unforgettable holiday.

Drinking

Wine gone wild

Judith Burns muses the rise of organic and biodynamic wine



Daruvar

IT IS INCREDIBLE to think that ancient techniques can suddenly become a 21st century fad, yet that seems to be what has happened when it comes to the current trend for natural wines. And if you've newly discovered natural wines you may also not know that Croatia has a long history of production and makes some of the best in Europe!

As people question what they eat, so we believe they should question what they drink. In the very early '2000s we first tried natural wines in Croatia and decided this was the way forward for our own wine-drinking future. We liked the lack of chemicals; that we didn't wake up with a thumping headache in the morning; that we could taste grapes in our glass rather than a chemical concoction; that they matched our slow food ethos; that we were always going to be surprised when we opened a bottle, that the road that took us to uncorking a particular wine was itself an adventure.

Fortunately, Croatia has lots of small producers, many making wines in a low intervention way, as their parents,



Miloš Vineyard

ARMAN

M A R I J A N A R M A N



«The best young Malvasia istriana, Vinistra award»

TOP ISTRIAN QUALITY WINES FROM 1880`S



Miloš Vineyard



Plavac Mali



Dalmatia



Clai Vineyard

grandparents and forefathers did before them. As they may not have a 'bio' or 'eco' certificate displayed on the label and there's no standardisation as such in the natural wine world, it's up to the wine lover to discover what is organic, natural or biodynamic and what is not. The words 'contains sulphites' (*sadrži sulfite*) have to appear on the back of a wine label, but it's the level of sulphites as well as the techniques and production, the use (or lack of use) of artificial pesticides, sprays, chemicals in the vineyards and in the wineries that define whether a wine is being made naturally or not.

Making a wine using natural yeasts to ferment the grapes is certainly nothing new but their production is time and labour intensive so these wines tend to be made in small quantities and if bought retail they are not cheap so you won't find them in the supermarket!

So what to try in Croatia? Our instinct is always to go and knock on doors. Logically, many wineries with a hand-written *Vina* sign will be making wines in a low intervention way; they simply don't have the money to invest in making them any other way. And by cutting out

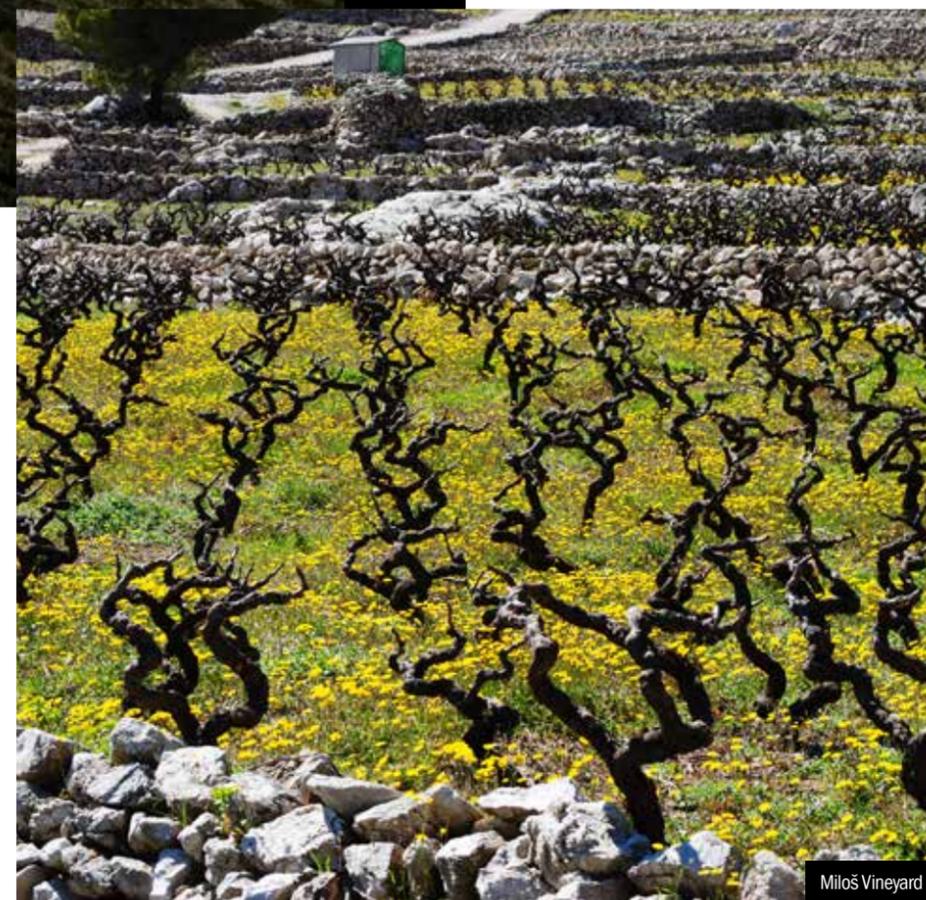
all the agents and distributors you'll get the best price from the producer himself, which means you can try more.

If you're buying retail, here are some recommendations.

In Dalmatia, Miloš is king. The family's range of unfiltered, unfiltered *plavac mali* (meaning 'little blue') is worth a visit to try at the winery itself. Their wine flight of different vintages, including a crisp fresh rosé and ending with a superb, sweet red paired with dark chocolate, is a revelation. And if staying near Ston, try pairing a chilled glass of their natural fresh plavac with the local oysters - it's a match made in heaven.

Young Denis Marušić, a third generation winemaker, is also making mineral, natural and biodynamic wines from his beloved indigenous plavac mali grapes on Southern Dalmatia's Pelješac peninsula.

Giorgio Clai, the ex-restaurateur, was always said to be the grandmaster of natural wines and his wines are fortunately now retailed more widely in local wine shops outside Istria; his 2009 vintages were extraordinary, specifically his long maceration orange (or amber) wines with their gloriously fiery colours and scents of



Miloš Vineyard

dried figs, herbs and burnt orange rind. Buy if you spot them.

Piquentum, a half French, half Croatian winemaker, whose early vintages were experimental and distinctive now works at Clai. We always preferred his reds to his white, although if you're new to the natural wine craze be warned that they do have a distinctly particular taste - his *refošk* is 'green', earthy and vegetal, taking on much of the persona of inland Istria's white clay soil.

Ivan Kosovec of Popovača, one of our favourite winemakers, makes some delicious *skrlet*, an indigenous grape from Moslavina, as well as chardonnay, frankovka and zweigelt, all expressing a true sense of place in their taste. He's young, experimental and unafraid. One to watch for the future.

Šember, Jastrebarsko. We were at the grand opening of the Šember family's amphora in 2015 that had been sunk into the ground at this winery. Only 500 bottles were made of 'Qvevri 2011', so grab this rarity if you can!

Tomac winery at Plešivica produces amphora wines including rarer sparklings, again with minimal intervention. Try his Amphora Brut Nature (chardonnay and old plešivica varieties), macerated in clay amphorae then barrels. Think dried fruits like quince and sweet brioche bread.

Pacta Connect, Judith Burns and Trevor Long. (pactaconnect.co.uk)

Ten bottles to buy from the supermarket

Croatia makes some of the best wines in the world, the perfect gift to yourself or to take back home for someone else



CROATIA PRODUCES some of the finest wines you will ever try. You may know it, you may not. But it's a fact. The country's reputation isn't as famous as world leaders like France or Italy, but those in the know have been aware of Croatia's brilliant wines for many years. This year alone, Croatian wines have swept the boards at each of the leading, internationally-recognised wine competitions and trade fairs.

Croatia's wines are of too high a quality and too small in production to ever become ubiquitous in UK supermarkets; you'd have to go to a specialist wine trader to pick them up. However, while in Croatia, wherever you go you will find supermarkets like Spar, which has well over 110 outlets in the country. Here, you can pick up some truly excellent wines to treat yourself or to take home.

Plenković Zlatan Plavac

Plavac Mali, a relative of Zinfandel, is Croatia's most famous red wine grape, frequently producing the country's most highly prized and expensive wines. Indigenous to Dalmatia, you can buy this wine variety at varying standards, including the protected appellations of Postup and Dingač (which are usually quite dry). At around 100 kuna a bottle, Plenković Zlatan Plavac is at the top end of the quality spectrum but still cheaper than many ultra-exclusive versions. This very powerful, robust red wine is rich in taste, high in alcohol and in tannins. Perfect for accompanying heavy red meat dishes, it never fails to impress when introduced to someone new.

Korlat Syrah

Although it is widely accepted that Croats are a Slavic peoples, one theory about their origin claims that the Hrvati (Croats) actually first emigrated from Persia. Could the Syrah grape, also known as Shiraz, have made the journey with them? Though not indigenous, this ubiquitous Korlat suggests Croatia could be the perfect place for this elegant wine. Distinguishable by the vivid, dark red ruby colour, its powerful, abundant structure and supported by aromas of ripe red fruits - cherries and raspberries - it is additionally harmonised with discrete spicy aromas and matured to perfection in barrique barrels. At around 100 kuna a bottle in Spar, this is a brilliant, dependable wine. Serve at 18°C.

Malvazija Istarska Matošević Alba

Of all Croatia's recent international successes in wine, the indigenous Malvazija grape from Istria has doubtless attained the most. Usually available as a fresh wine or a slightly aged version, it is the perfect accompaniment to cheese, cold sliced meats, salads, seafoods and more. This fresh, dry and lively Malvazija from Matošević, floral, fruity with citrus and apple flavours and a slightly mineral finish, is an excellent example of the best.

Iločki podrumi Traminac

Traminac is a cousin of Savagnin blanc (not to be confused with Sauvignon blanc) and Croatia's best is made in easterly counties Slavonia and Baranja. This version from Iločki podrumi is famously associated with the British royal family, having been served at both the coronation and wedding of the current Queen and the weddings of both her grandchildren, Prince Harry and Prince William. Light and smooth, but also crisp, this wine is the ultimate friend to bring to the party, compatible with everything from starters, pastas, risottos and white meat dishes to rich, fatty, meat dishes, spicy Asian cuisine and light desserts.

Kutjevo Graševina

Graševina is the most commonly planted white wine grape in Croatia, known in other European countries as Rhine Riesling, Welschriesling and especially as Italian Riesling. Croatians are pretty much the world authority on this grape. It is particularly synonymous with Slavonia and Baranja and especially the town of Kutjevo, where this extremely fine and widely available, top end version comes from. Fresh and with a slight, pleasing bitterness and medium alcohol content, this is a premium example of one of Croatia's best-loved, everyday wines.

Marijan Arman Malvasia Istarska

Marijan Arman holds around ten hectares of land near Vižinada in Istria, vineyards which his family have used for over 100 years. Marijan himself has revitalised the traditional endeavour to the point where they now produce between 80,000 and 100,000 bottles each year and, though he has recently won plaudits for reds, such as his Teran Reserve, it is for his Malvasia that he has won most awards. Marijan Arman Malvasia is pretty much faultless, bright yellow in colour, edging on green, its fresh, floral, fruity flavour the epitome of how the finest Malvasia should taste.

Korta Katarina Pošip

Should you travel to the island of Korčula, locals will push you to try their limited-production indigenous wine known as Grk or Gark, of which they are proud. To be honest, it's a bit of an acquired taste. They shout less about their other indigenous variety, Pošip, of which they actually produce more. A light bodied white wine with moderate acidity and sometimes the smell of apricot, peaches and citrus, it is perfect as an accompaniment to Dalmatian pršut (prosciutto), cheese or fish. If you're looking for the best current example from Korčula, try young winemaker Jakša Krajančić's Pošip Nerica. It can be hard to track down. This brilliant Korta Katarina Pošip, although from neighbouring Pelješac, is available at Spar.

Galić cuvee Bijelo 9

Lucky is the winemaker who makes an excellent single variety from their terroir, but a tip of the hat must be given to those who expertly blend varieties in order to produce something extremely special. Relatively young winery Galić blend 50 percent Graševina, 25 percent Chardonnay and 25 percent Sauvignon Blanc to make their Bijelo 9 (White 9). This is no random amalgamation of leftovers; the estate's best grapes go into this blend before it is fermented in oak barrels for nine months. This creates an elegant and smooth wine which, though fruity and reasonably sweet, is restrained and not at all sharp. A blended wine of undeniable quality.

Grgić Plavac mali

Strong in alcohol and with an even stronger taste, famed winemaker Miljenko Grgić's Plavac packs such a punch that it is recommended you open it at least two hours before you drink it. Produced on Pelješac, fermented with natural yeast but at a controlled temperature which helps to keep the character, the wine is aged for over one year in oak, the aroma it receives softened by a further two years of aging in the bottle. Deep ruby in colour, with heavy tannins, dark fruit and almost chocolate notes, at over 100 kuna a bottle, you should perhaps reserve it for someone you like a lot or someone who really appreciates their red wine.

Agrolaguna cuvee Vina Istria Terra Rossa

Another blended wine, but this time a red. Vina Laguna's Terra Rossa not only uses three different grape varieties, but also three different areas of cultivation, as each variety requires a specific soil type. An unstuffy wine, it is nevertheless an award winner, frequently lauded as being an extremely skillful and complex blend, especially for its modest price. Its appeal lies in Vina Laguna's pitch-perfect marriage of the fresh tastes of Merlot and the rich, fruity flavor of Istrian Terran with the fragrant, mineral notes of Gamay.





FIND EVERYTHING YOU MIGHT NEED THIS SUMMER IN SPAR AND INTERSPAR STORES

An ideal choice for your everyday shopping for groceries and other products on vacation are certainly the nearby SPAR and INTERSPAR supermarkets. Apart from the mainland, they are located all over the Croatian coast. In SPAR stores adapted for a pleasant shopping experience, customers can find not only a wide range of fresh fruits and vegetables, but also a large selection of cooled drinks needed for refreshment in the summer, as well as other

products by trusted brands. SPAR Croatia pays special attention to Croatian quality, so there is a number of local quality products in its offer.

Furthermore, SPAR and INTERSPAR stores offer a wide selection of summer beach accessories, ranging from colorful beach mattresses, masks and flippers to portable coolers, which are essential for being able to enjoy and relax on the beach. In order for

you to be able to properly protect your skin from the sun, there is also a wide selection of summer care products by SPAR's brand SUN KISS, such as creams and sprays.

The exact locations of SPAR and INTERSPAR stores for your summer shopping in Istria and Dalmatia are listed below.

You can find more information at www.spar.hr

INTERSPAR

 Zadar	Bleiburških žrtava 18	 23000 Zadar
 Kaštela Emmezeta	Cesta dr. Franje Tuđmana 7	 21212 Kaštel Sućurac
 CCO Split	Vukovarska 207	 21000 Split
 Mall of Split	Josipa Jovića 93	 21000 Split
 Pula	Ul. Rimske centurijacije 101	 52100 Pula
 Rijeka Rujevica	Ul. Maria Gennaria 18	 51000 Rijeka
 Rijeka Tower	Janka Polića Kamova 81A	 51000 Rijeka

SPAR

 Šibenik	Put Vida 6	 22000 Šibenik
 Zadar Supernova	Ulica akcije Maslenica 1	 23000 Zadar
 Zadar City Galleria	Polaičišće 4	 23000 Zadar
 Rijeka Čandekova	Ulica Franje Čandeka 8a	 51000 Rijeka
 Split Lička	Lička ulica 1-3	 21000 Split
 Split Poljička 2	Poljička 2/1	 21000 Split
 Kastav	Šporova jama 1a	 51215 Kastav
 Selce	Dražice 2	 51266 Selce
 Bibinje	Jadranska cesta 160	 23205 Bibinje
 Umag	Bujska ulica (Via Buie) 1	 52470 Umag
 Riva Boduli	Riva Boduli 1	 51000 Rijeka
 Labin	Pulska 2c	 52220 Labin
 Rijeka Osječka	Osječka 29	 51000 Rijeka
 Pula Santoriova	Santoriova 13	 52100 Pula
 Opatija	Nova cesta 68	 51410 Opatija
 Poreč	Obala Rade Končara 1a	 52440 Poreč
 Split Spinčićeva	Spinčićeva 2j	 21000 Split
 Zadar Starčevića	Ulica Ante Starčevića 3	 23000 Zadar
 Split Šubićeva	Šubićeva 5-7	 21000 Split

Travel

Get on down to Gruž

Jonathan Bousfield explain why there's more to Dubrovnik than the Old Town.



Red History Museum



Kazbek



Dubrovnik Beer Company (DBC)



Kawa



GIVEN THE DOMINANCE of the tourist industry and the sheer numbers of visitors, Dubrovnik is a notoriously difficult city to get under the skin of. Just where exactly are the locals? Dubrovnik's Old Town is so full in summer that the natives tend to give it a miss, doing their shopping in the portside suburb of Gruž, or drinking their Saturday-morning coffee on the café-terraces of Lapad. Those of them who are not busy working all summer in the tourist industry tend to spend their relaxation time in places outside the city walls. So if you want to experience a bit of urban 'authenticity', you really need to stroll through Gruž, where the aromas of the market and the buzz of people going about their business helps to remind you that you're in a Mediterranean town and not just a movie set. The outside-the-walls suburbs are also the

places where you will find many of the city's most innovative new businesses. Rents in the Old Town are too high and profit margins are too delicate for many young entrepreneurs to gain a foothold there. Lucija Tomašić's boutique cake shop Mala Truba is in Gruž; Ana-Marija Bujčić's agenda-setting restaurant Pantarul is on an otherwise anonymous street corner in Lapad. The more imaginative the project, the more likely it is that people will need to go outside the Old Town in order to get it off the ground. Sanja and Jonathan Kawaguchi's uniquely kooky art-and-design boutique Life According to Kawa is, admittedly, only a stone's throw from the Old Town – but they still needed a converted garage rather than a medieval stone house in order to deliver the contemporary impact they wanted. The one genuinely new and genre-breaking tourist attraction to open up in Dubrovnik

in 2019 is the Red History Museum, located in a former engineering factory out in gritty port-side Gruž. 'The whole of Dubrovnik is like one big holiday apartment' says museum co-founder Krešimir Glavinić. 'Tourist beds are found all over the place and most of them are actually outside the Old Town. However people have little relationship with the part of town in which they sleep, and head straight for historic centre on every day of their stay. Our museum is just about the only thing you can visit outside the Old Town that isn't a beach or a restaurant.' Indeed the decidedly non-beachy Gruž is increasingly becoming something of a buzz

word. Contemporary fusion restaurants Amfora and Porat turned Gruž harbour into a gastronomic destination when they opened up a couple of years ago. A few steps beyond the Red History Museum is the brewery and tap room of the Dubrovnik Beer Company, whose outdoor terrace-cum-car park fills up with an amiable mix of locals and outsiders on summer evenings. Just round the corner is Love Bar, with its incomparable terrace facing out onto the port. Love Bar was specifically conceived as a place where locals could hang out without being swamped by thirsty sightseers; a calculation that seems to have worked rather well.

The tourist industry's focus on Dubrovnik's Old Town has led to an unsustainable level of daytime overcrowding within the walls, and a huge amount of untapped potential outside them. Tourists are funneled into a tiny historical space which holds their attention for 2-3 days – after which they leave, unaware that the city may well offer more. The emergence of a Dubrovnik that is geographically dispersed and quirkily contemporary gives both locals and tourists more space to breathe. 'All parts of the city have potential' says Krešimir Glavinić, 'we just need more ideas.'



Pantarul

Time Out's Croatia hotlist

The 16 hottest destinations in Croatia this season.

REGULARS

Dubrovnik
Split
Zagreb

SPECIALS

HOTLIST

Pula
Rovinj
Vrsar
Funtana & Limski Canal
Poreč
Buje & Brtonigla
Labin & Rabac
Brač
Zadar
Šibenik
Rijeka



1

Lošinj
WHY GO? A cluster of luxury hotels are transforming into the Adriatic's premier spa destination.

2

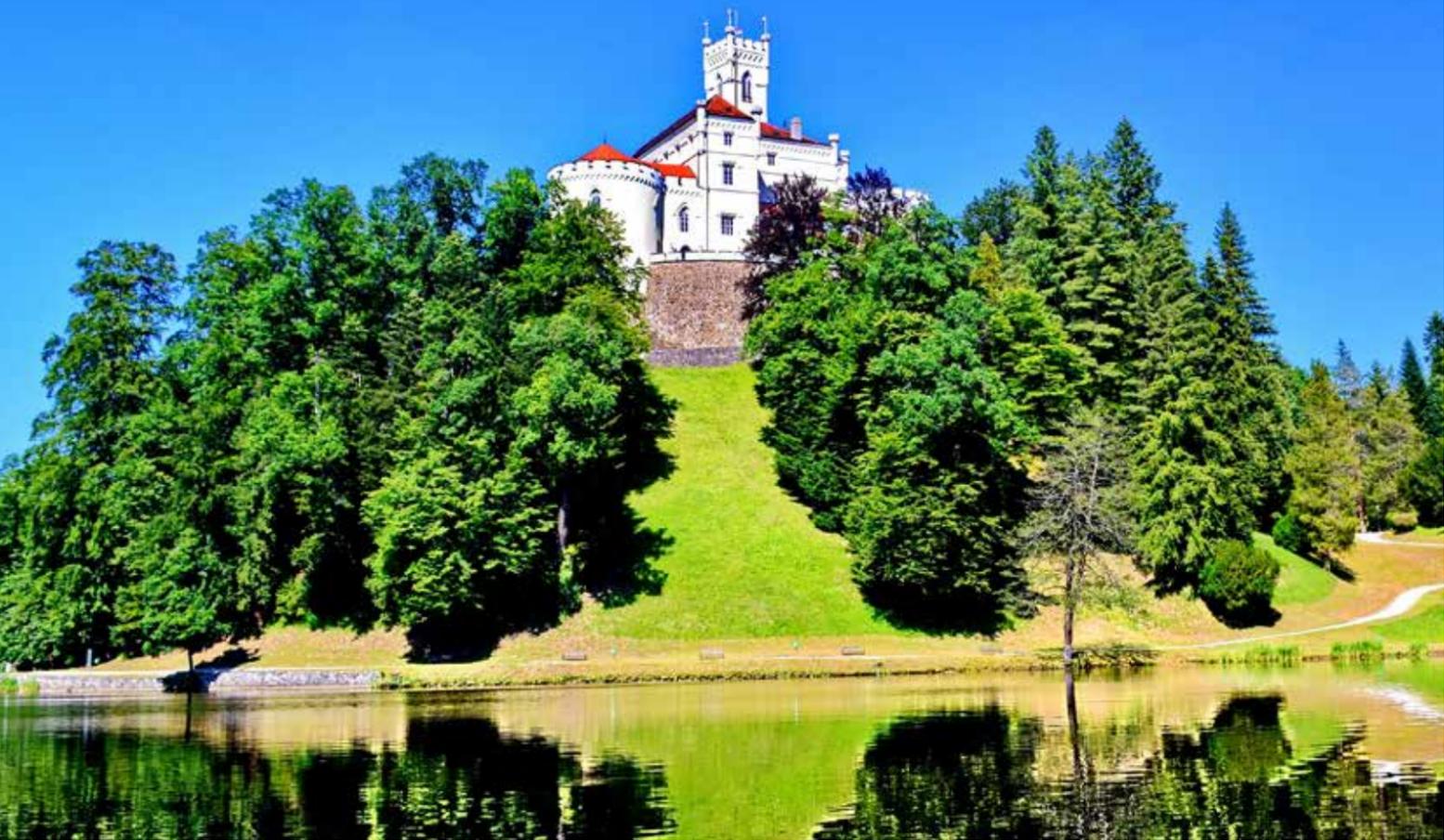
Karlovac
WHY GO? Karlovac celebrates 440 years in 2019 – get involved with the celebrations.

3

Continental Croatia
WHY GO? Pleasingly rural and undervisited, Continental Croatia offers stunning nature parks and incredible gastronomy.

Castle hunting in Continental Croatia

Some of the most beautiful and well-preserved castles are well worth travelling inland to visit.



THROUGHOUT ITS HISTORY, Croatia has existed under the influence of many different empires. The Greeks and the Romans once ruled here, the independent state of Venice was once in charge, then the Austro-Hungarian empire. Old aristocratic families such as Frankopan, Zrinski and Habsburg have ruled the country's regions or its entirety. Croatia has fended off attempted invasions by Bulgaria and Hungary, and put up a good fight against the Italians and the Ottomans. All of these instances required the defence of fortifications and Croatia is littered with old city walls, ruined castles and

evidence of lifetimes and lives spent securing the country. Some of the castles are still in incredibly well-preserved condition and here we pick ten of the very best that lie in the continental region, each of which is worth travelling inland to visit.

Trakošćan Castle

Grandly positioned atop a hill near Krapina, Varaždin County, in northern Croatia, Trakošćan castle dates back to the 13th century, although local legend says that it stands on the site of an even earlier fortress. Further mystery comes from the fact that nobody really knows

who commissioned its construction, nor who its original dwellers were. In 1556 the castle came under state control, but just 18 years later it was gifted to the Drašković family. In the second half of the 18th century, the castle was abandoned, with the family only resuming interest in the building in the middle of the 19th century. Deputy marshal Juraj V. Drašković renovated the house and grounds and it became a family dwelling until 1944 when the Drašković's were forced to emigrate to Austria. Today, the castle is one of the country's grandest, impressive all year round in whichever weather conditions and is now owned by the Republic of Croatia.

Continental Croatia

Ozalj Castle

Set strategically, but these days more spectacularly, on the top of a hill overlooking the town of Ozalj, just north and slightly west of Karlovac, Ozalj Castle is a beautiful fortification that is in good repair, especially considering it had to be saved from falling into ruin several times over its long existence. The original sections of the fortress are mentioned as far back as 1244, although it has been added to many times following transference of its ownership. The square tower is probably the oldest section, with the entrance tower (erected 1599) and its Gothic features added much later. A property long held by families of the Croatian aristocracy, first the house of Frankopan, then that of Zrinski, the castle holds a significant place in the tale of both, details of which can today be obtained from walking around the museum and library which now reside there. If visiting, be sure to check out the view of the river Kupa, which the castle also overlooks, plus the view of the castle itself from the waterside. Both vistas are incredibly picturesque.



Veliki Tabor

Veliki Tabor, a tentative World Heritage site, is a castle near Desinić in Zagorje which dates from the middle of the 15th century. Today it is a museum and host to events which are of cultural significance to the surrounding populace, such as food festivals and a famous short film festival. Most of the castle was built by the Ráttkay family from Hungary, in whose ownership it remained until 1793. A ghost story is attached to the building, regarding the body of a woman allegedly buried within the castle's walls. She was supposedly murdered upon accusations of witchcraft, the ulterior motive being that Veliki Tabor's then owner did not wish his son to marry the woman. Her voice is said to still inhabit the building.



Stara Sušica Castle

Stara Sušica Castle, located some 60 kilometres to the east of the city of Rijeka, is not one of the largest castles you will ever see in your life. But it is certainly one of the prettiest. A curious and charming building, like something from a fantasy film, it is a stunning architectural gem which has been lovingly restored many times, with different generations adding to its make up and producing what is now a sometimes bewildering blend of styles. The castle sometimes plays perfect host to fantasy role playing weekends and nestles in the shadows of tall coniferous trees, just outside of the town of Stara Sušica.

DISCOVER YOUR STORY
AT croatia.hr



Lužnica Castle

Lužnica, a baroque castle built in 1791, is located in the settlement of the same name, just a few miles to the west of the town of Zaprešić in Zagreb county. It was originally built as a residence for a noble family, but since 1925 the building has been owned by the Convent of St. Vincent de Paul, with nuns thereafter using the building as a residential and care home for elderly members of the sisterhood. From 1935, the building was used for the care of poor children, and then for educational classes organised by the nuns, such as cooking and home economics classes for women, plus a kindergarten and singing classes. In 2005, the residential care side of the castle was removed when a brand new, purpose built home for retired nuns was constructed nearby and in 2007, the Marijin Dvor's Spiritual Education Center was opened here, organizing spiritual and educational programs under the guidance of the nuns. Today, the castle holds conferences and seminars and is used by the wider community of Zaprešić and Zagreb county.



Krašić

Originally built in the Gothic style of the late 14th century, this complex of buildings was later reconstructed in Baroque style. From 1911 to 1913, it was rebuilt again and became a church. It is now the Parish church of the Holy Trinity, serving the population of Krašić, which is located near Jastrebarsko, about 50 km southwest of Zagreb. Enthusiastic visitors to the region will also not want to miss the nearby Pribić Castle, which is located just three kilometres east of Krašić, as it is also fantastic.

Castle Mailáth

Mailáth Castle is located in Donji Miholjac in Osijek-Baranja county, just next to the Hungarian border in Slavonia. Built from 1903 to 1906 for the Hungarian family Mailáth, it lies next to the former baroque castle Prandau. The castle holds rich Neo-Gothic ornamentation but also, unusually, contains elements of the Tudor style. Today the castles hold offices of the city's administration which prevents tourists being granted access to the interiors. However, you can still walk around the exteriors and it's well worth doing so if you're in the area.



Varaždin Stari Grad Fortress

Stari Grad fortress in Varaždin is one of the main tourist sights in this north Croatian town and is mentioned as far back as the 12th century. It was reconstructed in the 16th century, when it was converted into a modern Renaissance fortification. At the end of that century, it came into the hands of the Hungarian-Croatian family Erdödy. An image of the fortress used to appear on the back of the old Croatian 5 kuna bank notes although, presumably due to some printer's error, the image was famously stamped incorrectly and appeared in reverse to how it looks in real life.



Pejačević Castle

The Pejačević family dates back to the 14th century and played a significant part in the country's story during the period in which the Austro-Hungarian empire was being attacked and invaded by the Ottomans. They were very influential in the political, social, economic and cultural life of the country, especially in Slavonia, which is where this castle is located, close to Našice. In the second half of the 14th century, sections of the family settled in Bulgaria, joining communities of Bosnians and Germans who brought Catholicism to the regions around Chiprovtsi. The family also have another castle in Virovitica, some 80 kilometres to the north west of Našice, which is also called, rather confusingly, Pejačević castle.



Maruševec Castle

Maruševec castle in Varaždin county dates back to 1547, although it has passed through the hands of a series of different noble families and was restored and added to by many, notably in around 1618 by the Vragović family, in 1873 by the Prussian Count Arthur Schlippenbach and from 1883 when then-owners, the Pongratz noble family, made some minor adjustments to the building, but more significantly reconstructed its beautiful gardens. They owned the building until 1945 when such residences were seized by the Yugoslavian Communist authorities and the family fled to Austria. In the last two decades, the government of Croatia began the process of returning some such properties to the heirs of their previous owners. The building therefore now exists under the stewardship of Count Oskar Pontgratz.



The great outdoors

Continental Croatia teems with wildlife and spectacular scenery. Here are some of our favourite escapes.

Plitvice Lakes National Park



Kopački rit

PLITVICE

About a million visitors a year make it to what is arguably Croatia's greatest natural attraction, the Plitvice Lakes. And yet there is so much to see that the occasional crowds crossing on the many bridges and walkways hardly matter. And this natural wonder is just off the main highway between Split and Zagreb, all too close to Zadar, a regular destination for scores of tourist buses through the year.

Set in the Lika region, known for its war-time hardships and fantastic lamb, Plitvice is home to 1,146 species of plants, 140 types of birds and 50 mammals. Lynx, wild cats, brown bears and deer number among the mammals, as well as skunks, martens, weasels and wolves.

Most of all, though, people flock here for the series of 16 continually changing, cascading, crystal-clear lakes. The dimensions of these lakes have been created from centuries of calcium carbonate deposits, which find home in and on algae, moss and bacteria. This deposit-and-plant combination creates a travertine barrier, a natural dam, which is growing by a couple of centimetres a year. This process, a singular occurrence and the reason why Plitvice is included on UNESCO's World Heritage List, means the bodies of water and the waterfalls linking them are always evolving.

Atop these morphing conditions, boardwalks – tasteful enough to appear natural – follow the contours of and criss-cross over the fantastically turquoise water. These walkways, set amid the surrounding beech, spruce and fir forests, give you a fish-eye view of the lakes and falls.

Regular trams travel the length of the most visited part of the park, a two-sq km fraction of its near 300 sq km, from the 12 upper lakes to the four lower ones, and the Veliki slap, or big waterfall. If you start early, you can easily see the area in a day. There are also electric-powered boats to transport visitors across the larger lakes above. Although the water looks divine,

its greenish-blue colours changing according to the sunlight, swimming is strictly forbidden.

Plitvice has been a tourist attraction since the 19th century, with its first hotel set up in 1896. By then a conservation committee had been established, forerunner of the national park authorities of today. Tito had the area nationalised after the war. Plitvice made the UNESCO World Heritage list in 1979.

Almost incredibly, it was only a decade later that this area of outstanding natural beauty became the site of the first killing of the Yugoslav war, in 1991; the park did not come into Croatian control until 1995. For locals, Plitvice has added significance.

KOPAČKI RIT

Near the confluence of the Drava and the Danube rivers, a natural maze of interconnected lakes, reeds, woodland and pasture, Kopački rit nature reserve is one of the biggest areas of wetland in Europe. Visitors arriving by panoramic boat, horse or shank's pony can point their video cameras at nearly 300 varieties of nesting birds, including white-tailed eagles, black storks and green woodpeckers. The lakes also support a large population of carp, pike, catfish and perch – in certain areas of the 23,000-hectare site, angling and hunting are permitted – alongside an abundance of frogs, snails and insects, preyed on by those higher up the food chain, notably herons and cormorants.

The park is at its most spectacular during the spring and autumn floods, when a vast area remains under water for weeks at a time, creating a unique habitat. Woodland mammals include wild boar, pine martens and otters.

Kopački rit is a short drive from the Slavonian capital of Osijek ten kilometres away. Without your own transport, though, it's a trek.

The Visitors' Centre is outside the village of Kopačevo, a 4km walk from the nearest bus stop in Bilje. From the entrance, there's a pleasant two-kilometre walk to the

'Plitvice is home to 1,146 species of plants, 140 types of birds and 50 mammals.'



Kopački rit

LONJSKO POLJE

A vast area of wetlands, little-known Lonjsko Polje contains a remarkably diverse number of birds, fish, plants and mammals

A century or so ago inland Croatia would have been covered in bucolic villages made up of wooden houses and barns. Nowadays the only area that still preserves traditional architecture in any great quantity is the Lonjsko polje, located 50km south-east of Zagreb just beyond the provincial city of Sisak.

A strip of flatland running along the eastern bank of the Sava river, the Lonjsko polje contains a string of villages where rickety timber house still groan under the weight of shingle-clad roofs and flowerpot-filled wooden verandas.

What makes the Lonjsko polje doubly appealing is its status as one of Croatia's most important wetland environments. The level fields that stretch east behind the villages are prone to seasonal flooding, creating a unique watery habitat for a wide range of insects, birds and wild mammals. Much of the area now falls under the protection of the Lonjsko Polje Nature Park, which maintains visitors' centres in Krapje and Čigoć, the two most popular destinations.

The park is the largest protected wetland not just in Croatia but the entire Danube basin. An area of 50,650 hectares, it has 238 bird species, ten types of reptiles, 16 amphibians, 41 fish types, and 550 plant species. The place is so diverse it even contains 38 varieties of dragonfly. Lonjsko Polje is a key feeding station for many migrating birds, with black and white storks, white-tailed eagles and spoonbills, among the many regular visitors. It's the white stork that it most often associated with the park in the public mind.

But perhaps the real beauty of the Lonjsko Polje is just watching life happen around you: birds catching fish; fish mating in the shallows; work horses roaming free; indigenous pigs rooting around for food; ducks chattering with the sun high and the wind steadily rustling in the bushes and trees.

Hundreds of the creatures descend on Čigoć every year, and almost every house in the village boasts a stork's nest. The birds usually arrive soon after Easter and stay until late August, hatching their young and scouring Lonjsko Polje for tasty bugs, mice and frogs with which to feed them. Čigoć is one of ten European Stork Villages designated by the Euronatur foundation, a status that ensures an annual descent of thousands of camera-wielding trippers. The storks themselves are by now fairly immune to all the attention.

Signed nature trails lead east from Čigoć towards the seasonally flooded fields, although what you might see there depends on how wet a spring/summer/autumn the region has just experienced. With the river Sava winding its way past the Lonjsko Polje villages, however, you are never likely to be short of water-based activities, with boat trips frequently advertised in Čigoć and Krapje. There are also several well-marked cycling routes and hiking trails throughout the park.

The southern Lonjsko Polje village of Krapje is the best place to see the traditional wooden houses. Built near the riverbanks and at the edge of the plains, they have outdoor staircases where residents would tie their wooden boats to guarantee transportation when the floodwaters surrounded the homes.

When it comes to splashing around, Zagorje always did have a solid reputation, with mineral-spring resorts such as Stubičke Toplice and Krapinske Toplice providing sanatorium-style spa treatments as well as recreational swimming pools. However both places entered the 21st century looking a bit too old fashioned for the contemporary tourist industry.



Zagorje

ZAGORJE

Castles, churches and a new crop of destination spa hotels make Zagorje a delightful destination. Zagorje, a land of rolling green hills on the far side of Medvednica mountain, has always been something of a recreation area for Zagreb folk.

Perceptions of what Zagorje offers are slowly changing, with traditional attractions like historic castles and pilgrimage churches jostled aside by a more pronounced accent on lifestyle and leisure. It's Zagorje's spa hotels, restaurants and swimming pools that are increasingly pulling in the visitors.

However Zagorje's tourist facilities are currently in the throes of a major overhaul, with Krapinske Toplice building a large new aquatic centre and Tuheljske Toplice – the largest swimming-pool complex in the country – opening a brand-new four-star wing of its spa hotel.

Thirty-five kilometres north of Zagreb, Terme Tuhelj sits in a typically bucolic Zagorje valley lined with round-topped hills. The indoor section of Terme Tuhelj's stirringly named Water Planet (Vodeni planet) sits beneath an innovative timber and metal canopy, with sunlight streaming in through the huge side windows. The outdoor part of the complex boasts wave pools, a 250-metre-long 'river' (grab an inflatable ring and just go with the flow), and shallow play-pools for the kiddies.

Terme Tuhelj's naturally occurring, mineral-rich mud is celebrated for its joint-soothing and skin-softening properties. You can test

this out at Tuhelj's SPAeVITA centre, which also offers an up-to-date wellness menu of de-tox programmes, ayurvedic massage and aromatherapy.

Terme Tuhelj's four-star hotel accommodation is made up of three startlingly geometric blocks decorated in bronzy-copper colours; a bold choice indeed for Zagorje.

South-east of Tuhelj in the Stubica valley, Terme Jezerčica is a good example of the Zagorje spa industry at its more intimate, with a low huddle of buildings in a narrow green valley concealing an all-things-catered-for aquatic centre.

Indoor and outdoor pools are fed by natural thermal springs, and there's an adjoining Wellness centre offering sauna, steam-bath and massage options. You'll see locals paddling around or sitting in one of the Japanese-style tubs that run along the side of the complex. The Jezerčica's hotel is more modest than Tuhelj's,

with small but adequate rooms decked out in muted colours.

Accessed by zig-zagging roads that slalom their way across Zagorje's many ridges, the town of Marija Bistrica is primarily known for a much-visited pilgrimage church that sits prettily on top of a small hill. It also offers some of Zagorje's classiest accommodation in the shape of the four-star Bluesun Hotel Kaj, whose swish, soothing rooms come with country-meadow views.

The hotel's wellness centre features sauna, Turkish bath, massage and beauty treatments and exudes an aura of private calm that you might not get in Tuhelj or Jezerčica. The Kaj's restaurant grows its own vegetables in a plot behind the hotel and serves typical Zagorje food (meat, meat, lots of meat) with a dash of European imagination and finesse. Sadly, Zagorje's fast-improving spa facilities do not yet include any remedies for over-eating.



Lonjsko Polje



Terme Tuhelj

Osijek Top 20

The clean, green environment of Osijek is little-known to tourists, its county of Slavonia and Baranja the country's gastronomic centre.

LOCATED IN THE FAR EAST of Croatia, sharing borders with Hungary, Serbia and Bosnia, Osijek, the capital of Slavonia, is frequently overlooked by tourists. Arguably the home of Croatia's friendliest hosts and some of the finest examples of Austro-Hungarian cuisine in the country (Osijek majors in grilled meats and game, and smoky, slow-cooked stews), the distinct delights of Croatia's fourth largest city can be enjoyed year-round. The trickle-down tourism from Croatia's coastal resorts has yet to be properly felt in Osijek – meaning that, for now, you will be drinking and dancing with the locals.

1 Go swimming!

Osijek may not have the sea, but that doesn't mean you can't enjoy swimming. In summer months, the open air Copacabana complex is teeming with people. Pay ten kuna and stay for as long as you like, taking advantage of multiple pools (although they can be very busy). Some locals prefer to stay immediately outside, swimming in the cool and refreshing Drava river. Be aware, this river has strong currents, so this option is only for strong swimmers and they are advised to stay near the banks. With ten pools and more available at renowned nearby spa Bizovac Toplice, their free bus transfers should also be taken advantage of.

2 Sample some of Croatia's great wines

The word is out about Croatian wine, but you're more likely to hear about their reds. You'll pay a minimum of 70kn, usually more like 100kn, for a really nice bottle of Croatian red in stores.

But, if you know what to look for, a fantastic bottle of Croatian white wine can cost as little as 30 or 35kn. These brilliant bargains are usually from Slavonia, places like Đakovo, Kutina, Daruvar, Ilok, Erdut and Orahovica in particular. Get to grips with the best Croatian red and white wines in Osijek at the casual Vinska Mušica, with its simple outdoor area, the overtly posh Muzej Okusa or the simple Vinoteka Vinita. All have excellent wines available by the glass.

3 Cool off in the cathedral

Osijek's cathedral is the tallest building in Croatia outside of Zagreb and boasts fantastic neo-Gothic ornamentation. Gargoyles grimace down at you as you enter, but it's worth running the gauntlet, not least because on particularly hot days, the church's thick walls offer the best escape from the blistering sun. Damaged heavily during the war in 1991, its restoration was a priority for the city and occurred at a record speed. If you're a fan of impressive churches, you also perhaps shouldn't miss the cathedral in Đakovo, some 50km to the south west of Osijek. It's one of Croatia's largest.

→ Trg Pape Ivana Pavla II 2 (031 310 020)

4 Go to the zoo

Osijek's zoo is located on the opposite side of the Drava river from the bustle and noise of the city, making it the perfect place for its inhabitants and visitors to relax. They do so inside the largest open space dedicated to animals in all of Croatia's zoos, which aims to provide residents with as much of their natural habitat as possible. Bison, camels, wolves, antelope, goats, bears, monkeys, big cats,

birds, giraffe and meerkats are just some of the 80 species you will find across the zoo, its aquarium and terrarium.

→ Sjevemodravaska obala 1 (031 285 234, zoo-osijek.hr)

5 Walk Croatia's best promenade

Mediterranean and Adriatic waterside promenades are a town's most popular walking space, a time-trodden route to meander of an evening or a place where you can sit in a cafe or bar and watch the world pass by. Though inland, Osijek does not miss out on having a promenade. On the contrary, it has Croatia's best. Osijek's promenade stretches down both sides of the river Drava for several kilometres. On the city side, you'll see families and couples taking an

early evening stroll, rollerbladers and bicyclists. The opposite side, which is closer to wild nature, is more commonly used by joggers or youths wishing to escape prying eyes. The city side is a particularly picturesque walk, taking in most of Osijek's best sights including the old city walls and pedestrian footbridge.

6 Explore the catacombs

Osijek is nothing if not a city of intrigue. Previously ruled by Turkish, Austro-Hungarian and Roman authorities, its architecture is often a bewildering jumble collated over many eras. Rumours persist that a whole network of tunnels pass through the city, reaching well into Baranja county. Were these last utilised secretly by occupying Nazi forces, as local

rumour goes? Partial evidence of Osijek's underground network can be found in Tvrđa. The catacombs on the opposite side of the river are another intriguing, forgotten space, providing a unique backdrop on some summer nights to music parties and festivals. Just up and to their left is a modern area of outdoor worship, which is well worth a look.

7 Visit the city centres

Restricted by the river, Osijek's expansion has been elongated. This has resulted in the city having three centres. The easterly Donji Grad, a marketplace and social hub, isn't notable much for visitors. Lying centrally is the old town centre, Tvrđa and to the west, the city centre of Gornji Grad. Approaching the latter from

Kapucinska street, with its grand, official buildings, feels like a mini version of Zagreb's famous Ilica. It opens out onto trg Ante Starčevića which boasts, like the adjoining Županijska, some fine Austro-Hungarian architecture.

8 Walk the city walls

At the far end of Tvrđa, alongside the river Drava, are the old city walls of Osijek. This Hapsburg fort, which was the largest and most advanced on the border with the Ottoman Empire, is an extremely impressive sight from the banks of the river. On summer evenings, friendly youths sit atop the walls, so daytime visits are recommended if you want to explore the architecture alone. Nightclub Outside is on one of the other walls, a superb location



Osijek Cathedral

and view. The impressive Vodena vrata (water gate) is the only one which survives from the four that were originally built and leads now to a recently renovated area with a moat. The surrounding areas have also been promised a much needed renovation.

9 Try Slavonska pizza, a festival of pig

Pineapple on pizza may be scoffed at, but only a fool would complain about non traditional pizza toppings after trying Slavonska pizza (no, it doesn't have pineapple). This meat extravaganza is loved by those in the know all over Croatia, nowhere more so than its birthplace of Slavonia. With ham, bacon and paprika spiced sausage, like much Slavic cuisine, this is a veritable festival of pig. Usually onions, mushrooms and a few chilli peppers also appear, sometimes sour cream too, but for a special treat ask for an egg on top. The three best in Osijek are made by Lipov Hlad, Pizzeria Novi Saloon and Rustika, the latter, a charming and popular restaurant, being the nicest place in which to eat it (all three do home delivery).

10 See the colourful pedestrian bridge

There are three bridges across the expanse of the river Drava in Osijek. The rail bridge and road bridge are pretty unremarkable, but the much-loved pedestrian bridge is one of Osijek's most recognisable landmarks. Opened in the '80s, this beautiful suspension bridge is the most popular



Slavonska pizza

link between the river's two sides and is used by walkers, cyclists, skaters and joggers throughout the daytime and evening. At night, it is brilliantly lit in an ever changing spectrum of colourful lights. Before you visit, read up about the fascinating 7 kilometre long Suleiman Bridge that once stood here.

11 Sup some craft and local beer

First produced in 1697, Osijek-made Osječko is the first Croatian beer ever produced and their lager is still claimed by some to be the best of all standard beers in Croatia. Even more make the claim that Osječko's black beer and lemon is the country's finest radler. Domestic and other craft beer options have exploded in Croatia compared to the same old menu of lagers available just 10 years ago. Many places now have their own small breweries and Osijek is no exception. Osijek's locally-brewed Beckers is easily one of Croatia's best pale ales. General Von Beckers pub on Tvrdica is a great (and cheap) place to try it. Osijek's other best places to drink craft beer are Beertija, Gajba, Pivnica Runda, Podrumčić and the annual Craft Beer Festival, a major and lively outdoor date in the city's social calendar.

12 Check out some live music

Some regard Osijek's current music scene as tame

compared to previous years, but it still thrives, not least in order to service the city's sizeable university population. At the end of term, look out for free concerts around the campuses, or in the outdoor areas Vega and Kazamat at Tvrdica. Extreme sport event Pannonian Challenge and Osijek's Days Of Wine usually have good music programmes attached too. 14 year old UFO Festival does a great job annually, although some international guests wouldn't go amiss. You can hear local rock acts weekly at places like Cadillac, Hir and sometimes Exit and Slavonia's Tamburaška folk music at Fort Pub. Try and catch young Tamburaši Veritas there on a Thursday or weekend night; what they lack in sobriety and sensible haircuts, they more than make up for with gusto and stamina.

13 Walk a trail of statues and monuments

Start at Red Fičo, a small red car overcoming a tank at the intersection of Trpimira and Vukovarska. The nearby, conjoined parks of kings Držislav and Petar Krešimir hold the vivid 'Dying Soldier' by Robert Frangeš-Mihanović, plus the modern, mother and child and Miroslav Krleža statues. The first statue situated outside Spain honouring Pablo Picasso is near the riva. Statues of Croatian violinist Franjo Krežma, president



Pedestrian Bridge

Franjo Tuđman and writer Augusto Cesarcu occur on the walk between Kapucinska and the huge Monument to Croatian War Veterans at the end of trg Slobode. The main man himself stands imposing in Ante Starčević square, a

modern seating sculpture from the Communist era just to his side (initially removed after the war, it was brought back to appease the demands of locals). There are more besides, such as the Sakuntala and sphinx near the centre's cinema and Mother Of Cats too.

14 Go to the 100 year old city centre cinema

One city centre cinema remains in Osijek and there's a real charm to visiting the art deco building of Cinema Urania. The cinema is comfortable, it's no problem to take your own food and drinks and they show all the recent blockbusters as well as boasting a well considered programme of more leftfield and art house movies, including some world cinema.

→ Vjekoslava Hengla 1 (031 205 507, facebook.com/kinourania)

15 Sample Tvrdica, the city's ever-popular social centre

Although not very large, Tvrdica is one of the most charming city centres in Croatia and a must-see both by day and by night. The citadel is protected on three sides

by green areas and bordered on the fourth by the river Drava. Tvrdica, Osijek's old town, is the best preserved and largest ensemble of Baroque buildings in Croatia. Highlights to see in the daytime include its museums and St. Michael's Church. Do its twin towers still carry a flavour of the Mosque on whose foundations it is built? In summer, sit under one of the hundreds of sun shaded chairs in the central square, drinking coffee alongside locals. At night, Tvrdica becomes even more alive as it holds many of Osijek's best bars, restaurants and nightclubs.

16 Sample the traditional foods of Slavonia

Slavonia Baranja is Croatia's undiscovered gastronomic gem, its produce famous throughout Europe. Taking influence from Hungary, Slavonia offers the best Kulen - a lean, paprika and garlic pork sausage - plus much of the premium fruit and veg you'll find on plates at exclusive seaside restaurants. Eat the spicy fish paprikaš as a tasty soup first, then take on the river fish chunks in the bottom of the serving pot, as

they have many bones. Perklet is a thick stew best made with strong beef or venison flavours. Arguably Croatia's best dish, Čobanac is a spicy stew that's best sampled with wild meats like boar and venison. Try them at Osijek's Slavonska Kuća, Kod Ruže, Vrata Baranje or Čarda kod Baranjca, in Bilje at Ugostiteljski Obrt Varga, or out of town at Citadela or Darócz in Vardarac or Didin Konak in Kopačevo.



Fiš paprikaš

17 Try the late night entertainment

Osijek has a lot of great bars, many already mentioned. Lots of them stay open late at weekends. Dali stays open until 3am every night and is lovely in summer when the (great) service and seating move outside. Exit, in Tvrdica, is an alternative bar with loud DJs and a nice, young crowd who sometimes dance. Nightclubs Q-Club, Rockatiki and Kaos, all play turbo-folk, the two latter to a younger, less flashy crowd. Tufna is the world's most frustrating club; you'll wonder how a club with three floors can have such bad music on each. It is very popular with young people. Epic is perhaps the most credible, holding specialist monthly nights of house, techno and hip hop although Oxygene in Gornji Grad is also good; their events range from live jazz to techno.

18 Visit Slama Land Art

This multi purpose space, located at Kamila Firingera 3 in Tvrdica, offers a genuine reflection of the proletarian art and culture of Osijek. They host jazz evenings, art exhibitions, daytime art classes and art picnics, with grass sculptures made by in-house events curator Nikola Faller. It is to his credit and that of sympathetic members of the local council that this vibrant and unique arts space exists. Look out for the live music Slamanje events, curated by Osijek band Harvo Jay, which invites bands from all over Croatia and further still. The young crowd at these events is great and Harvo Jay, who regularly play, are

certainly one of Croatia's current best indie rock bands.

→ Kamila Firingera 3 (instagram.com/slama.land.art)

19 Rent a bicycle

Osijek is located in the huge, flat expanse known as the Pannonian basin and is a very green city, its air always fresh and clean. You can navigate much of Osijek using tree-lined footpaths and parks, barely spending time along a road. And the best way to do so is by bicycle. Cyclists of any ability can tackle the town. As well as the parks, there are clearly designated cycle paths over much of the city, generous allocation in particular lying on the promenade, making bicycles one of the best ways to cover the extended routes on either side of the river Drava.

20 Use the city as a base for amazing day trips

Having an international airport and a major train station, Osijek is an extremely well connected city. Its rail line was one of Croatia's first and very recently restored is the charming, Habsburg-era route from the city to Pecs in Hungary. Less further afield, Osijek is a great place to stay while you explore the region, with many winemakers worth visiting within easy reach, as is the protected nature reserve of Kopacki Rit. Sand beaches better than those on the coast can be found in secret spots up and down the river (ask a local) and neighbouring Vukovar also has a great film festival. Also nearby, Vinkovci has one of Croatia's best annual folklore events.



Čobanac © Maja Danica Pečanić

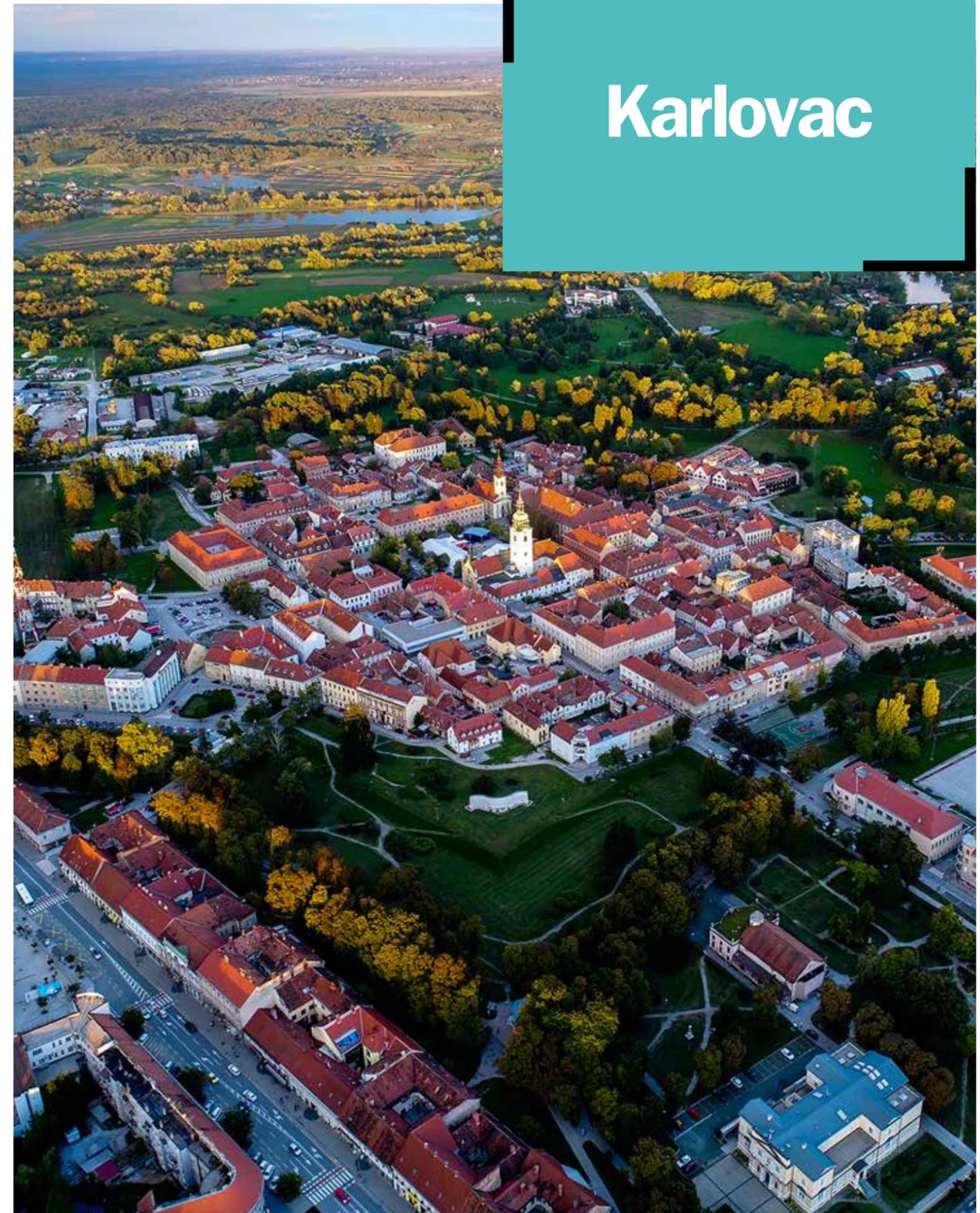
DISCOVER YOUR STORY AT croatia.hr

Full of life

Don't fill your life with days, fill your days with life.

**CROATIA**

PHOTO BY ZORAN JELAČA



KARLOVAC

THE TOWN WHERE EVERYONE HAS TWO BIRTHDAYS

Karlovac's 440-year birthday celebrations are just the icing on the cake, argues Marc Rowlands, who finds this Medieval city offers more than ever before.



LOOKING AT KARLOVAC in an aerial photograph, you can still clearly see the six-pointed star whose defensive walls and moats once defined the limits of the town. But, modern-day Karlovac has spilled out from these once necessary restrictions. The edges of its suburbs now reach into nearby villages to form a thoroughly modern conurbation where over 55,000 people reside.

This gradual overflow is the typical story of a people and their progress, the finer details obscured by time as villages become towns and then sometimes cities over the course of generations. This, however, is not the case with Karlovac. For, although its moats are now without water, the walls comparatively redundant and worn in places, this star still shines. It illuminates the history of Karlovac, revealing the town's story from the very first day on which its construction began.

That very first day was 13 July 1579, orders for the city's construction came from the regional rulers, the new settlement intending to better fortify the area than their castle in Dubovac which still looks down upon the town today. In modern times, this rare ability to exactly pinpoint the birth of the town has some seriously fun ramifications for the city's residents and visitors.

Everyone in Karlovac has two birthdays, their own and that of the city. Commemorated for much longer than anyone still living can remember, these celebrations now merge into other well established annual events providing a summer full of excitement, entertainment and gastronomy. World-famous music stars and colourful international dance troupes, the spectacular theatre of Croatia's second-largest hot air balloon event, the biggest bonfires

you've ever seen and arguably the best beer festival in the country all mark Karlovac as a town with an indefatigable ambition and optimism. Considering the number of obstacles it has faced over the years, modern-day Karlovac is nothing short of an inspiration.

The star-shaped fortress of Karlovac was deliberately placed at the confluence of the Kupa and Korana rivers, its suburbs now extend to the rivers Mrežnica and Dobra, inspiring its most famous nickname 'the city of four rivers'. Once, these surroundings were a notoriously difficult topography of swampland and floodplains. People living in this terrain were susceptible to disease – easier to deal with if you're in a walled city equipped with the most modern sanitation of the day than if you're attacking forces outside, sleeping in a wetland insect paradise. Those unlucky invaders were the Ottoman army, Karlovac then being on the frontline of European defence against the encroaching Turkish forces.

Of course, the placement of Karlovac was not made solely to hamper its attackers; the four rivers which surround the town, essentially tributaries of the Danube, were trading routes that can be traced back to Roman times. From Karlovac, these rivers could be navigated to reach routes that would allow boat passage as far as Bosnia, Serbia, Romania and Bulgaria to the east, Hungary, Slovakia and Slovenia to the north and Austria and Germany to the west.

These days, aside from one remarkable exception, no trading boats navigate the rivers around the town, although it is common to see locals in small boats trying to catch some of the plentiful river fish which reside here. Instead, Karlovac's rivers are largely used for recreation, providing some of the cleanest waters and





the best inland beaches Croatia has to offer. Almost every day in summer, Croatians from the surrounding regions make a beeline for the river Mrežnica to cool off under picturesque waterfalls, relax under the shade of lofty trees and get willfully lost in near-wild nature, save for the small wooden bar nearby serving up ice cool beers and freshly fried whitebait (papaline) drenched in lemon juice. Although no longer dependent on the waterways for transport, Karlovac's rivers remain at the heart of the town's activities, so it's fitting that the birthday celebrations should commence here.

Though Karlovac's birthday is a big deal every year, in 2019 the date has a significant milestone of being its 440th. St. John's Eve is the official marker for the start of proceedings, an all-day event with street performers, a tug of war across the river, free outdoor music concerts and a firework display. Its most unique aspect is perhaps the construction of two bonfires, either side of the river, which can reach as high as ten metres into the sky. Once lit, their seemingly inexhaustible flames are reflected in the water surface almost until the start of the new day. From there on in, Karlovac embarks on a summer-long party that takes over almost every part of the city.

Finally freed from its frontline responsibilities in the 1690s, Karlovac slowly embarked on its journey to become a thriving and prosperous town. With no sight of the Turkish invaders returning, Europe's defence permanently shifted further south. Under the relative calm and stability of the Austro-Hungarian empire, Karlovac began to expand outside its city walls and trade along its rivers would become an increasingly common sight.

Establishing itself as a key inland port for the transference of goods with lands to the east, the

next step would be to link Karlovac to the sea-ports on the Croatian Adriatic coast. To that end, three famous roads, the Josefina, Carolina and Louisiana were built, the latter, to Rijeka, completed by the French during a very brief period when the town was under Napoleonic rule. These roads still exist to this day and remain popular routes connecting the continental region to the sea. This link between Karlovac and the sea also allows access to one of Croatia's most popular landmarks, Plitvice Lakes National Park. Karlovac serves as the perfect overnight stop off for many travelling to marvel at its gushing waterfalls (not least because swimming is forbidden at Plitvice, which is certainly not the case at the waterfalls in Karlovac's rivers).

Recreation became more of a focus as the town became more prosperous and in the 1800s, drained defensive ditches were converted into some of the rich parklands that now run through the town. Walking around Karlovac today, these green areas, straddling the river or by avenues of shading trees, provide idyllic spots to rest, relax and escape the heat of the day.

Karlovac's cultural significance grew with its prosperity and in 1804 the town established the first school in Croatia dedicated entirely to music tuition. The school still exists to this day, its impact on the town greater than ever thanks to the many public performances given by its students, faculty and at events such as the annual International Piano Festival. In 1920, Croatia's first purpose-built cinema was opened in the city. Sadly, the building no longer functions as a cinema. You could muse that this is the result of karma - the cinema was named after Thomas Edison, in hindsight, an ill-thought-out choice considering the American inventor's rival, Nikola Tesla,

grew up not far from Karlovac and was even schooled in the town.

Through the 1900s, Karlovac became an important hub of industry, its population expanding with workers who ran the factories. Sadly, after the fall of Yugoslavia, much of this industry ebbed away, aside from the Karlovac brewery, which at one point was the town's biggest employer (it has been superseded in more recent years by arms manufacturers). Karlovacko beer is one of Croatia's most popular and to try it at its best, visit the Karlovac Days Of Beer, where a special unpasteurised version is made. Running since 1984, it is perhaps Croatia's oldest beer festival and bookends a summer

full of events which draw top-flight regional musicians and international music stars.

No longer key to transportation, Karlovac's rivers have now taken on a new life. Aside from the swimming and fishing, some of Croatia's most thrilling raft excursions take place on the Kupa and Dobra rivers. There are many cycle routes around the city too and when you consider the colourful spring carnival, mushroom foraging treks in autumn plus an Advent season that grows bigger every year, Karlovac proves there's a lot to enjoy here year round. But, for a town with such a significant history, it's perhaps only fitting that today, Karlovac should have so much to offer.



TO DO

The best events in Karlovac this season

Karlovac Summer Stage

Karlovac's traditional summer of outdoor events goes all out this year in response to the city's special 440 anniversary. This three weeks of festivities incorporates events of all kinds, for people of all ages and interests. There are outdoor picnics, face-painting for children, folklore events with costumed dancers, art events, theatre performances and it will also incorporate the spectacular theatrics of the Hot Air Balloon Festival. There's a ton of incredible musical performances to look forward to as well, from classical concerts and opera to acoustic groups, an appreciation of African and African-American music, some of Croatia's top pop and rock

stars (from established icons to some of the most exciting new names on the scene), traditional sounds like Tamburica and choral performances. Events take place across the city in venues like Šanac, the Music Pavillion, Aquatika, the Katzler Pavillion, outside and inside venues like the City Museum and GK Zorin Dom, the city centre square Trg bana Josipa Jelačića and nearby Radićeva street.

→ Various venues (zvjezdanoljeto.karlovac.hr) June 23 - July 13

Saint John's Eve

Karlovac's oldest event, Saint John's Eve begins at sunset and is an evening celebration prior to the following day's Feast Day of Saint John the Baptist. The event



Saint John's Eve

here can be traced back at least 240 years and coincides with the traditional pagan celebration of the summer solstice. It is held on both banks of the River Kupa where food and drinks will be available around bonfires competing with their counterparts across the river. As well as fire choreography and activities, a fireworks display is one of the best-loved parts of the evening and this year musical entertainment on the night is provided by top Croatian rock band Zabranjeno pušenje. The event is also the official opening of the Karlovac Summer Stage.

→ Various venues (zvjezdanoljeto.karlovac.hr) June 23

Karlovac Hot Air Balloon Festival

The second largest hot air balloon event in Croatia sees the skies above the city prettily decorated with colourful blimps. For three days they



Karlovac Hot Air Balloon Festival



Edin Karamazov

will appear above Karlovac, offering rides to those who book in advance. One of the most spectacular aspects of the event are the evening shows, in which the balloons take to the skies after dark, the flames from inside impressively lighting up not only the balloons themselves, but also the night sky for miles around. Aside from nighttime, most of the flight action takes place from very early in the morning.

→ Various venues (zvjezdanoljeto.karlovac.hr) June 28 - 30

22nd International Festival of Folklore and World Flavours

This colourful and enlightening event sees folklore societies of Croatia joined by international counterparts for a week of processions, dance, music and other theatrics. This year, visiting international groups will come from Mexico, South Korea, Ukraine, Guam Island, Ivory Coast and China, each attending the programme's official happenings in traditional costumes. By day,

the event looks at traditional folk music instruments of the world and there are plenty of examples of world cuisine to try too, with each of these aspects including interactive workshops and masterclasses. Part of the festival sees screenings of contemporary world cinema including, this year, the south Korean psychological drama 'Burning' (2018) and Alfonso Cuarón's 'Roma', Mexico's winning entry for Best Foreign Language Film at the 2019 Oscars.

→ Various venues (mff-karlovac.com) June 30 - July 6

Edin Karamazov: Made In Silence

Bosnian musician Edin Karamazov is best known internationally as one of the finest lutenists in the world and has collaborated with the likes of the Hesperion XX, L'Arpeggiata, Hilliard Ensemble, Mala Punica, Orpheus Chamber Orchestra ensembles as well as singers like Andreas Scholl, Maria Cristina Kiehr, Arianna Savall and Sting, with whom he recorded a



22nd International Festival of Folklore and World Flavours

Karlovac

full album of lute-led folk music from the 16th century called 'Songs from the Labyrinth'. At this free outdoor performance, Karamazov will perform songs by the likes of Johann Sebastian Bach, Steve Reich and giant of contemporary Cuban music, Leo Brouwer, on acoustic and electric guitars.

→ Trg Aquatike (zvjezdanojeto.karlovac.hr) July 4

Living Room Festival

Eight days of free musical performances taking place outdoors on Trg bana Josipa Jelačića between the hours of 5pm and midnight. There are at least two shows each and every night with highlights including Koprivnica ethno-punk band Ogenj (July 7), Techno Vikings, a group featuring four saxophonists and a drummer playing rearranged versions of electronic music classics (July 9), the Croatian Pink Floyd Show (July 11), plus popular Croatian bands Budenje and Parni Valjak (July 12).

→ Trg bana Josipa Jelačića (zvjezdanojeto.karlovac.hr) July 6 - 13

Ischariotzcky

Formed in Brela, on the Dalmatian coast, Ischariotzcky are without doubt one of Croatia's best and most exciting new pop rock bands. Recent concerts in Zagreb have only added to the rumour that this group are the next big hope for the Croatian music scene and the fact that they sing in English only adds to their viability as an international export. Their widescreen, intelligent and ambitious sound is showcased on debut album 'Recovery', released in 2018. Their extensive line-up includes Joško Klarić (vocals and keyboards), Petra Klarić (vocals), Jure Brekalo (drums), Petra Šošić (vocals and keyboards), Jakov Puharić (guitar), Stipan Popović (acoustic guitar), Ivan Srzić (bass guitar), Borna Augustinović (percussion), Danijel Curić (trumpet), Tea Bašković (trombone) and Valentino Juras. This event occurs as part of the Living Room Festival.

→ Trg bana Josipa Jelačića (zvjezdanojeto.karlovac.hr) July 6

Carmen

The stars of the Croatian National Theatre in Osijek make a special visit to perform Bizet's classic opera the Dom OS RH Zrinski. One of the most popular and frequently performed operas in the classical canon, this controversial and unflinching tale tells of the downfall of proletariat soldier Don José, whose life falls apart after he falls in love with the passionate gypsy Carmen.

→ OS RH Zrinski (zvjezdanojeto.karlovac.hr) July 10

The 440 birthday of the City of Karlovac

Celebrations for the 440 birthday of the city will take place throughout the day at numerous locations, culminating in the traditional ball, which takes place on Josip Jelačić square. Anyone who wishes to dance a waltz in honour of the town may do so, and many do. To mark the special birthday, at least 440 pairs of dancers will take part this time. At 10pm, famous Croatian

singer Gibonni hits the stage to entertain with a free concert in the open air.

→ Trg bana Josipa Jelačića (zvjezdanojeto.karlovac.hr) July 13

River Film Festival

A month-long film festival with lots of free events. The largest section of the programme takes place at Foginovo kupalište near the town centre, but the event tries hard to include smaller settlements from the broader Karlovac county region, so you can also find some events taking place in Ozalj, Duga Resa, Slunj, Kamanje, and the closing night, which takes place at Petrova gora by Vojnića. This year's opening film, 'Ikea for Yu' is a documentary made by Karlovac-born director Dinka Radonić, who now lives and works in Sweden. In total, there will be 13 screenings with films from various genres including documentary, fiction, animation and drama. Aside from the movies, there will be games, discussions with some of the



Promenade



Don't miss!

23 JUNE - 13 JULY KARLOVAC SUMMER STAGE - SUMMER STARS

30 JUNE - 6 JULY 22ND INTERNATIONAL FOLKLORE FESTIVAL AND WORLD FLAVOURS

19 - 21 JULY THE INTERNATIONAL ETHNO JAZZ FESTIVAL

18 JULY - 2 AUGUST THE RIVER CINEMA

30 AUGUST - 3 SEPTEMBER 33RD KARLOVAC BEER FESTIVAL

13 - 30 DECEMBER THE KARLOVAC ADVENT

KARLOVAC
grad susreta



CROATIA
Full of life

For more information please visit
www.visitkarlovac.hr

Karlovac

moviemakers and quizzes.
Various venues in Karlovac (facebook.com/
rijecno.kino) July 14 - August 11

Ethno Jazz Festival

The International Ethno Jazz Festival presents the best Croatian artists and prominent jazz artists from the world jazz scene. The festival is held in the castle Dubovac, the ancient fortress overlooking the city of Karlovac. The castle provides an excellent ambience and acoustics for the event. This year, headlining artists include Irish singer Mary Coughlan and her trio, who will be drawing on her substantial works of 13 albums and a career of almost 35 years in their performance. They appear on Friday's opening night. On Saturday night, experienced Rijeka-based jazz drummer Branimir Gazdik appears with his quartet. A known name on Croatia's jazz scene, in 2017 Gazdik produced his first solo album, drawing on the help of many musicians he has encountered in his career so far and drawing on the sounds of Latin music, jazz and pop for its fusions. On Sunday, it's the turn of legendary, 79-year-old American multi-instrumentalist, composer, arranger and bandleader Ralph Towner. Though he started his career as a classically-trained pianist, Towner picked up the guitar in his final years of education and it is for this instrument he is perhaps best known. Throughout his career he has infused world folk musics and all manner of jazz into his



Mushroom Week

compositions and performances. Of particular note is the fact that Towner dislikes using amplification in his performances, preferring instead to rely on the natural acoustics of his instrument and surroundings. There really could be few better places in the world to catch him than this year, at this event in Castle Dubovac.
→ Castle Dubovac (facebook.com/
MedunarodniEthnoJazzFestival) July 19 - 21

33rd Karlovac Days of Beer

One of Croatia's oldest beer festivals, Karlovac Days Of Beer is an extended weekend that incorporates much more than just an appreciation of the amber nectar. Although there will be a large range of beers for you to try, with many Croatian and international beer companies represented, there's also a lot of gastronomic delights to sample, plenty of activities and free performances by some of Croatia's biggest musical stars from the worlds of rock, pop and hip hop. This year, performances will take

place at venues like Dr. Franje Tuđman promenade, basketball court Šanac, the Edison cinema, Foginovo beach and ŠKR Korana with highlights including Rijeka rock band Jonathan, vintage rock performer Jura Stublić and his band Film, alternative rock bands Kawasaki 3p, Mašinko, Kojoti, Pips, Chips & Videoclips, Rijeka's master of rock'n'roll revival Neno Belan & Fiumens, Yugoslavia-era legends Prljavo Kazalište and Psihomodo Pop and a full day of hip hop and trap music with some of the biggest names on the Croatian scene including Buntai, Edo Maajka, High5, Tram 11 and Vojko V.

→ Various venues (danipiva.net)
August 30 - September 3

Mushroom Week

Run by the Karlovac Mushroom Society, who organize mushroom hunts, days trips and restaurant meet-ups throughout the mushroom season, this week-long event is the annual highlight of their calendar. Taking place for

the 34th time in 2019, Mushroom Week sees the society's numbers swelled by over 500 on the main hunt, as both the curious and the inspired pour into the city from outlying areas, joined by some international visitors from Slovenia, Bosnia and elsewhere for journeys of discovery in the wild, wooded areas surrounding the city. Anyone can join in, regardless of age, motivation or level of expertise – members of the society are on hand in all guided walks and will inform you about the mushrooms and fungus you come across on the routes. There's an exhibition of mushrooms in the city and over 10 restaurants will take part in the celebrations, offering mushroom dishes as specials throughout the duration.

→ Karlovac suburbs (gljivarsko-drustvo-karlovac.hr) End September / beginning October

Karlovac Music School Gala Concert

Marking the 215th anniversary of the Karlovac Music School, the oldest music school in Croatia, this evening of classical music will feature former and present students of the school and members of the faculty accompanied by the school's choir and symphony orchestra.

→ Dom HV Zrinski (kamo.karlovac.hr) October 10

A Christmas Fairytale

The Symphony Orchestra of the Music School Karlovac Music School play a free concert offering the most popular songs of the festive period. Just one of an ever-growing number of events that take place in the town's charming Advent programme.

→ Dom HV Zrinski (kamo.karlovac.hr) December 12

Karlovac Carnival

Run in conjunction with Karlovac Tourist Board, the city's youth initiative KAOS have been tasked with reviving this ancient springtime carnival, which represents rebirth following the slumber of winter. Meeting up in the city centre, a large and colourful procession of masked and costumed participants make their way through the streets accompanied by many musicians. There are street performers and actors adding to the programme and a full day of festivities, food and drink for all ages.

→ City centre streets, Karlovac (visitkarlovac.hr) February 22

#visitkarlovac

Should I stay for a day, or two, or maybe for life?

The latter is recommendable, but if you do not have the time for such a momentous and lasting

decision, just drop by. Karlovac is always here, en passant, always on your way, wherever you go.

Stay for a while, let a chartered royal free city stop the time for you. It has the power to do it.



Ethno Jazz Festival



The Karlovac grain boat

A replica wooden freight boat some eight years in the making, which explores the nature and history of Karlovac rivers.

TIME MOVES SLOWLY in a village. This is true for many of the small riverside settlements that surround Karlovac. Removed from the bustle of the city or the traffic of a main road, you can go for several hours without hearing a single car engine. The dart of a dragonfly or the rare glimpse of a kingfisher flying above the water is sometimes the only thing that could compare to the frantic pace of life elsewhere. But, in the rivers surrounding Karlovac, especially the Kupa, this wasn't always the case.

In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Karlovac was a significant inland port, the river Kupa linking it to another, the Croatian town of Sisak. On this route, goods like salt, spices, wood, tobacco and all manner of grains would travel by boat, emanating from as far east as Temišvar (Timișoara) in Romania and passing

through Serbia and Bosnia before arriving in Karlovac. From Karlovac, this route was linked to Adriatic seaports by road, horse and cart enabling continental products to reach the coast. But the bulk of the journey was made by huge wooden boat, pulled along the river Kupa by men and horses on riverside paths that extended for hundreds of kilometres through Croatia.

These days, the waterside walkways are unused and overgrown as freight transportation shifted to road, rail and plane. The once-busy waters around Karlovac are now comparatively silent, the stillness broken only by the splashes of summertime swimmers and tiny fishing boats. Except for the village of Brodani, that is. There, a remnant of the past, a 25 metre-long replica wooden grain boat has appeared, exploring a passage lost in time and reclaimed by nature.

'There are three types of river boat that used to operate on this route, the korablja, a small boat, around 12 metres long, which was used for smaller, local transport and a much larger boat called a burcule. The tumba is the type of boat we built, a middle-sized boat, about 25 metres, which could take the weight of around 30 tons,' says Jasmina Cvetković, whose dream of bringing such a boat back to the waterways around Karlovac took a full eight years to realise.

Jasmina's nearby home village of Zamršje must have seemed more quiet than ever ten years ago after she and her friend, Ana Prepolec, came home after several years of university in the capital of Zagreb. Though happy to have returned to their beautiful place by the river Kupa, put simply, the girls grew bored. But, in



their years away, they had acquired a new set of skills and were brimming with ideas.

A replica grain boat seemed to tick so many boxes for them. If they could do it, it would be a way to put their beautiful, silent village on the map, increase the tourist potential of their town, explore the history and nature of Karlovac and allow them to remain within such an idyllic setting without being forced to seek jobs elsewhere. Nevertheless, it was an idea of unparalleled ambition.

'Most people were friendly, they listened,' remembers Jasmina with a smile, 'but they couldn't help but laugh at the idea. 'Okay, girls, Okay. No problem', they said.'

Undeterred by such responses, Jasmina and Ana decided to give shape to their idea

and apply for European funding. They proved more than capable in their project proposal. Though they still faced some scepticism, a breakthrough came when a small amount of funds was donated by the Croatian Ministry of Tourism and the town of Karlovac to have technical documentation drawn up to present to the European authorities. Started in 2008, it took a full two years to secure the funds required to realise the project.

'We didn't know what was going on, what was happening with our idea, but at every step we were receiving positive news. It felt like our dream was really going to come true,' says Jasmina. 'To be honest we didn't really have time to celebrate receiving the money because our worries immediately switched to 'Ok,

just how are we going to do this? How can we actually build this boat?'

'When we sat down with the designer, Nikola Brnardić, his first drawing was of a much smaller boat,' she recalls. 'We said 'No, no, we want the bigger one, 25 metres, with a small house on it'. He said, 'My God, you want a tumba. Such a thing no longer exists on the rivers between here and Ukraine!'

Nevertheless, with a father who was a boat owner in Sisak and a family history of working in river transportation, in Drnavic they had found the right man. However, with plans finished, there still remained the task of actually building the boat. Luckily, they managed to find another perfect fit, Ivan Zec, an engineer based in Zagreb.

'He was 72 at the time he accepted the project,' says Jasmina, with a clear admiration for Zec's abilities and a gratitude that he took them on. 'In some ways I think he viewed the construction as the pinnacle of the challenges in his working life. Ivan had worked in the wood processing industry and also in the metal processing industry. He set about the task with great enthusiasm and pragmatism. Before he even started on some sections of the boat's building, he first had to make the necessary tools, they simply did not exist here at this time. We were lucky to find him because all of the boats that are now constructed in continental Croatia are made of metal, not wood. You would usually have to go to the coast to find someone with any knowledge of constructing a wooden boat. But he knew everything we were talking about.'

The construction of the Karlovac Grain Boat aka 'Zora' took place at a dry dock in Zagreb, a laborious undertaking because of the authentic nature required of the replica.



Karlovac

'It was difficult enough just to collect the wood for the construction,' remembers Jasmina. 'We needed 40 square metres of dry oak, which was so difficult to find in Croatia in the measurements we needed. In the end, we had to source that wood from every corner of the country; some came from Slavonia, some from Medimurje, Zagorje, Gorski Kotor. Ivan really had to hunt it down.'

Once completed, the boat was placed atop a huge truck and transported by road to the inland port of Sisak, the overnight journey took a full ten hours as obstacles like road signs had to be removed (and then replaced) to allow it to pass along the relatively narrow thoroughfare. They arrived at the shipyard in Sisak by the morning and a huge crane was employed to lift the boat off the truck. It took another five hours to take the boat from the top of the yard down to its position in the water. From there, the rest of the journey would be made on the water, a route not travelled by a boat of this size for around 150 years.

'We had to wait for a high level of water in order to begin the journey by river, which was okay because some things were still not finished on the boat,' says Jasmina, who was nervously waiting by the phone in Zamršje for updates about the progress. 'While we were still making some construction work in Sisak, at one point the river level dropped so low it seemed like maybe there would be no way to make the trip. Luckily, a huge amount of rain arrived at just the right moment, the river level rose and the captain called me in the middle of the night 'Come to Sisak within two hours, we must begin the journey now!' The boat set off on 30 April and we had arranged the grand unveiling in Karlovac for 1 May 2017. It really was the last possible moment for us to do it. In May and June, the water level no longer rises, so March and April were the last chance we had to make the trip. If we had not done it then, we would have completely missed a whole summer season of work, a great loss.'

Even after acquiring historical knowledge of the river navigation needed for a boat this size, the passage to Karlovac was not without its difficulties, the boat having to traverse some



small rapids in order to reach its new home.

'The river Sava was flowing so fast that at one point we feared our motors would not be strong enough to take us into the Kupa,' says Jasmina. 'They needed around 11 hours in total to navigate from Sisak to Karlovac by night. When the boat finally came into Karlovac in the daylight, people were lined along the side of the river, waiting for us and waving. Some were even crying. It must have seemed as strange to some of them as would a spaceship arriving in the town.'

'Zora' has now been situated in Brodani for two years. Operating seasonally, from April to November, it makes trips at 11 am daily along the river Kupa, the boat's host Ivan providing information about the history and nature around the river during the journey. Classes of school children, work colleagues on team-building excursions, international tourists visiting the nearby Plitvice Lakes or Karlovac and daytrippers from all over Croatia have taken the trip. Along the 90-minute journey, they feast on delicacies of quality dried meat, cheese and bread, each made by local producers, as are the traditional rakias and white wine they are washed down with. For larger groups, Ivan is joined by animators wearing traditional

folklore costumes that would have been more commonplace when these boats were seen along Karlovac's rivers. Musicians playing acoustic instruments entertain the audience, their folk songs and the enthusiastic chatter of guests the only sounds to break the peaceful silence of the tree-lined route. Remnants of Karlovac's defensive past are pointed out, from the period of the Ottoman attacks to Second World War bunkers and evidence of the most recent war, which saw Karlovac again on the frontline and within striking distance of guns commanded from the Serbian Krajina.

The area the boat travels is sometimes known as the Valley of the Butterflies with some 108 different types living here. Many are spotted along the way, as are kingfishers, ducks, cormorants, otters and beavers and rare, protected species like the orao štekavac (white tailed eagle), which has a wingspan of 1.8 metres.

'He's not afraid of us any more,' says Jasmina of the eagle. 'He flies in front of us or sometimes rests in the branches of a tree and watches us go by. It's incredible to see. He's a big beast, you know? One day we saw a large bird, similar to a stork, but grey, and he was flying above us carrying a big snake in his mouth. Truly, every day on the river is different.'

Children in particular seem to love the journey. They are able to climb atop the captain's hut and steer the boat from the traditional high rudder, wear the captain's hat and ring the boat's bell. Enthusiastic groups can also opt for a three hour excursion which takes in waterfalls, the confluence of the Kupa and Korana rivers and even offers the opportunity to stop, swim in the river and dive to see the remnants of a recently-discovered sunken Roman boat, its cargo still visible on board.

It's now ten years since Ana and Jasmina first dreamed of returning such a boat to the rivers of Karlovac. The smiles of their visitors and the genuinely appreciative feedback left for them on their social media pages are testament to the value of their vision made real. They are, perhaps, also an indication that nobody should ever underestimate the determination of women with a great idea.



THE ONLY FRESHWATER AQUARIUM IN CROATIA

100 fish species
40 endemic species
25 aquariums
5000 specimens

WORKING HOURS

WINTER (01.10. - 31.03.) 09:00 - 17:00 h

SUMMER (15.06. - 30.09.) 09:00 - 19:00 h

SCHOOL SEASON (01.04.-14.06.) 08:00 - 19:00 h

Every day of the week

Public institution AQUATIKA-FRESHWATER AQUARIUM KARLOVAC

📍 Branka Čavlovića Čavleka 1A, Karlovac

📞 +385 47 659 112

✉ info@aquariumkarlovac.com

🌐 www.aquariumkarlovac.com



CROATIA
Full of life

KARLOVAC
grad susreta



Projekt je sufinancirala Europska unija
iz Europskog fonda za regionalni razvoj.
EUROPSKA UNIJA
Ulaganje u budućnost



KONKURENTNA
HRVATSKA
COMPETITIVE
CROATIA

Something fishy

Karlovac is the home of Croatia's only freshwater aquarium, the sleekly designed Aquatika centre.

FOR MANY who come to Croatia, catching a glimpse of dolphins is the highlight of your seaside vacation. Bathed in sunlight, their playful leaps from the Adriatic are captured on camera and video, attracting likes on social media. Summer 2019 has already seen them joined in the footage frenzy by two sizeable sharks, their images captured off Korčula and Makarska.

'Water, water, everywhere, nor any drop to drink' famously bemoaned the seafaring protagonist in Samuel Taylor Coleridge's epic poem 'The Rime of the Ancient Mariner'. But, though famous for its coastal waters, the occasional exotic animal and myriad magical islands, that has never been a problem in Croatia. Away from the sea, the country has one of the largest proportions of surface and underground water reserves in the world; compared to the rest of Europe, per capita, such reserves are greater only in Iceland and Norway.

62 percent of inland Croatia belongs to the Black Sea catchment basin, including three of its epic rivers, the Sava, Drava and Danube, all of their tributaries, including the Kupa, Korana, Mrežnica and Dobra rivers which surround Karlovac and even the famous Plitvice Lakes National Park nearby. The smaller remainder of the country falls into the Adriatic catchment basin including major rivers such as the Cetina and the Neretva. Much of inland Croatia is low lying land, in fact, vast swathes of the country, from Zagreb in the west, all the way to the country's easternmost borders with Serbia, Hungary and Bosnia, are part of the Pannonian Basin and were once underwater. Indeed, Croatia's water resources and potential could be compared to an iceberg, its saltwater seas the visible tip, its freshwaters a giant which goes comparatively unnoticed.

As the only aquarium in Croatia dedicated to freshwater fish, Aquatika in Karlovac is trying to readdress this balance. Shining a light on not only the inhabitants of Croatia's inland rivers



and lakes but their entire natural environment and the ecosystem of which they are an integral part, this ultra-modern complex is a must-visit for anyone travelling from Zagreb to Plitvice Lakes National Park, the perfect preface to its trails of waterfalls and freshwater lakes.

With over 150 different species of fish living in its rivers and lakes, Croatia has more types of freshwater fish than any other country in Europe. Over 50 of these species do not exist anywhere else in the world. Aquatika is therefore certainly not lacking in exhibits to display.

Each family of fish that lives in Croatian rivers is represented at the centre and a lot more besides. The country's abundance of

ichthyological diversity is enabled only by Croatia's geographical position within two separate drainage basins. Aquatika tells the tale of Croatia's river fish by examining, over the complex's three levels, each stage of their habitat within these basins, from river source to where the freshwater meets the salt of the sea.

The first level of the centre looks at the highest region, the river source and its headwater. Here, the water is cool, clear, full of oxygen and fast-flowing, lying atop a rocky bottom as any sediment is flushed downstream by the gushing water. Species such as trout live here, feeding on insects, their larvae and crustaceans before their growth in size demands they switch to a larger meal of other fish.

'Aquatika shows there's much more to take home from your visit to Croatia than mere glimpses of dolphins'



Aquatika's huge tanks are not decorated with fake castles and sunken boats like they might be at home. Instead, the centre has tried to recreate the natural habitat of the fish. As you descend through Aquatika's display floors, following the same route as a river flowing downstream, the flora becomes more abundant and the floor beneath the fish slowly transitions from rock, then to pebbles and onto shingle and sand. As the environment changes, so does its inhabitants.

Graylings are the next kind of fish to appear on your route, feeding on invertebrates that live around the sparse plant life, rocks and natural

detritus that occurs here. Then, the number of species explodes in variety as we enter the region most populated by river fish, the water temperature having risen considerably since the earliest tanks, the oxygen levels having plummeted and the waters more calm. Such conditions enable the growth of algae and fungi, creating a bountiful feeding environment for fish where you can see chub, asp, nase, vimba, bleak and loaches, swimming in waters which have a sand and gravel bottom.

As the river courses towards the sea, the expanse of water widens, its speed slows and temperatures are warm. Here, the river is ornamented by aquatic plants, many able to root themselves to the river bed and fish such as tench, perch, carp, and catfish feed around the sand and silt bottom, before flounders, sole, mullet and ruffe appear at the point where the freshwater meets the salt water.

Aquatika is mostly a celebration of Croatia's inland waters and their inhabitants, an enlightening journey in which these sometimes monstrously large and curious-looking fish can be seen happily swimming aside their natural neighbours. But, if nothing else, it is a realistic journey. Therefore, while the tone of the tour allows you to marvel happily at these wondrous creatures, some space is left in the multiple-language texts aside the tanks (and in the guided tours, which can be accessed on a phone app or led by a member of staff) for cautionary notes about conservation.

Freshwater fish are one of the most threatened groups of vertebrates, their numbers greatly affected by water pollution and the interference of man in the natural course of the water flow for agriculture and other industrial reasons. The building of dams and the drawing of waters for irrigation and other human consumption causes their habitat to degrade and details of such activities and their impact are detailed at the aquarium.

Another harmful intrusion on the life of Croatia's freshwater fish is the introduction of non-native and invasive species, many of which thrive in Croatian waters. Some of these are also



The architecture of Aquatika

Located right next to the river Korana, the Aquatika complex is inspired by the historic city centre of Karlovac, a star shape which is surrounded by defensive earth embankments. While a definite landmark and destination venue, the roofs of the complex's buildings are covered in earth and grass so they blend into the surrounding natural environment. In the centre of the complex is a courtyard, with the main aquarium lying to one side, its gift shop, brimming with cute, locally-made trinkets, visible just by the entrance. To the other side lies the centre's café bar, with three footpaths leading from the central courtyard. The outdoor areas are constructed in such a way that they can host cultural events and meetings (such as the music concerts detailed in our Karlovac Events listings). Aquatika, which was designed by Zagreb-based 3LHD, has won awards for its inspired architecture. It has also won awards for its disability access.

Outdoor pursuits

After looking at the friendly fish of Aquatika, chilling in the freshwater tanks, a common thought is that you'd just like to jump in and swim with them. Such an undertaking might be quite off-putting to fellow visitors, but you now can swim just outside. One of Aquatika's most recent additions has been the redevelopment of the riverside area next to which the complex sits. This exact part of the river Korana was the first and best public beach in Karlovac and the redevelopments have turned the waterside into an authentic beach destination. A large riverside promenade has been constructed, part of which forms a nature trail for willing participants. It's the perfect place to relax and enjoy while you digest all the info you've taken in at the aquarium.

on display at Aquatika and are quite pretty to look at, although it's difficult to feel much for them after you've fallen in love with Croatia's naturally-occurring species while on the tour. Easier to love are the turtles that greet you in tanks by the aquarium's entrance.

Emerging from the cool space of the aquarium and into the sunlight of Aquatika's central courtyard, you feel much better informed about Croatia's rich biodiversity and the landscape that makes the country's interior so beautiful and spectacular. A revelatory and close-up experience, Aquatika shows there's much more to take home from your visit to Croatia than mere glimpses of dolphins.



Foginovo Beach

BUILT as a Habsburg-era six-pointed fortress, Karlovac is a verdant town set at the confluence of four rivers. Many historic landmarks remain, along with restaurants, family-run farms, galleries and excellent museums like the City museum and the Museum of the Homeland War Karlovac-Turanj, all of which are great to visit, as is

the town centre residence of the the Franciscan monks which has a very special exhibition area

1 Relax at Foginovo Beach

Croatia's first designated river beach is right here in Karlovac – on the banks of the Korana. As it's right in the centre of town, it's

long been a popular spot for locals. Sepia photographs taken a century ago show men, women and children bathing in the rushing rapids. Though free to enter, these days Foginovo is fully modern and renovated, overseen by lifeguards, and there are shallow areas for little ones. Along with diving tower set at ten metres and boards

five and three metres high, you'll find ball games, an outdoor gym, deckchairs and a café.

→ Koransko šetalište

2 Follow the Karlovac star

The original fortress of Karlovac constructed in 1579 may now only consist of a few

Karlovac Top 20

Karlovac is Continental Croatia's surprise package, a green escape less than an hour away from Zagreb.



City Museum

remnants but you can still follow the line of the defensive moats created by the Habsburgs to keep out the Ottomans. Today these are lovely promenades of chestnut and linden trees, with extensive parkland stretching beyond. Within the borders are clustered many historic attractions and landmarks, centrepieced by the Catholic Holy Trinity Church and Orthodox St Nicholas, around the main square of Trg bana Josipa Jelačića. Perhaps the most prominent spots to observe the 440-year-old fortifications is right outside the Karlovac City Museum, in the north-west corner of the historic hub.

3 Sail down the Kupa river

Down the Kupa from Karlovac, Brođani typifies the riverside villages that relied on small boats for their livelihoods. Now visitors can go on a 90-minute sailing trip in a replica of one of these vessels, the Zora. Every morning at 11am, instead of grain, this sturdy wooden craft takes tourists past unspoiled nature to observe wild ducks, cormorants, otters and beavers, and man-made landmarks such as the Pauline monastery and the Church of St Mary of the Snows in Kamensko.

→ Zamršje 30B (098 763 768, aurora-colapis.hr)

4 See how medieval Franciscan monks lived

In the heart of Karlovac stands Holy Trinity Church, its Baroque

belfry visible for miles around. This is part of the monastery complex where Franciscan monks lived and worked behind a walled courtyard and garden. They still do and today their spiritual, cultural and educational endeavours are illustrated by the rare books, artworks and religious artefacts that here form the important permanent collection of the monastery museum. Visitors may also sample the monastic beer still brewed on site.

→ Trg bana Josipa Jelačića 7 (047 615 950, franjevci-karlovac.hr)

5 Discover recent history

Turanj is located where bridges over two rivers

meet, at the gateway to Karlovac a short distance north. Its strategic importance meant that it bore the brunt of the local fighting during the Croatian War of Independence from 1991 onwards. Also referred to as the Homeland War, it led to the break-up of Yugoslavia and the creation of Croatia. Here, in fields where the conflict would have raged, visitors can now observe the military planes, equipment and weaponry used back then at the recently finished Museum of the Homeland War.

→ Turanj 2

6 Dine in a medieval castle

One of the best-preserved medieval castles in Croatia, Dubovac owes its appearance to a 15th-century Renaissance rebuild. Little is known of the previous construction, although the square tower remains. Home to notable aristocratic dynasties, as well as the Irish military commander Laval Nugent von Westmeath, who died near here in 1862, Dubovac underwent several changes during the 20th century but now serves as a museum and an atmospheric restaurant, the Bistro Kastel. It stands on the western outskirts of Karlovac, close to the Kupa river it was built to defend.

→ Zagrad gaj 5 (047 658 922, facebook.com/bistrokastel)

7 Marvel at a medieval monastery

Its shining white façade reflected in the bucolic Kupa river

that flows alongside it, the Pauline Monastery looks as pristine now as it did when it was built in 1404. Together with the equally stark white Our Lady of the Snows Church alongside, constructed at the same time, these ecclesiastical landmarks are set at Kamensko, just outside Karlovac. Rebuilt after war-time damage, the monastery contains impressive frescoes and sculptures and still holds services, particularly on Assumption Day and Ascension Day.

8 Stroll amid beautifully landscaped gardens

In a town known for its parks and gardens, Vrbanjić is particularly revered in Karlovac. There's its name for a start, the founder of this recreational zone south-east of the town's historic centre being Josip Vrbanjić who was both mayor and an eminent pharmacist. As several types of park were popular around Croatia at the time, Vrbanjić decided on an English style to one side, a French style in the centre and to have the other side given over to evergreens. Unveiled in 1896, the Vrbanjić Gardens also contained statuary but this was removed for fear of damage during World War I. Close to the Kupa river, it remains a favourite place for family picnics.

9 Browse Karlovac market

Karlovac has had a market almost since the city's foundation in the late 1500s, although for the best part of four centuries, it was



Park Šanac

set up on the main square, Trg bana Josipa Jelačića. In 1971, a new market building was opened south-west of the city centre, on Trg Hrvatskih Branitelja. With open and roofed areas, this expansive space remains in place, with solar panels a more recent addition. Produce tends to originate locally – there are usually six types of apple, for example, among fruit in season, all kinds of greens and other vegetables. Look out for the fresh, unprocessed milk and the snacks of čvarci, pork crackling.

→ Trg hrvatskih branitelja 2 (047 412 093)

10 Wander along Radićeva

Radićeva is the main thoroughfare in the town centre. For the most part pedestrianised and certainly picturesque, Radićeva makes for a pleasurable stroll whether you're sightseeing or not, though it may be worth setting aside an hour to visit the City Museum. Next are the main square, Trg bana Josipa Jelačića, and the Holy Trinity Church. Later, Gradska Straža, a busy meeting place, is dotted with terrace bars and cafés. Continuing further,

you're left close to Foginovo Beach. At the start, near the river, don't miss the Katzler Pavillion, a mini museum and souvenir shop of which locals are extremely proud

11 Admire Orthodox iconography

Built by the local Serbian community in the late 1700s, the Orthodox Church of St Nicholas and its Baroque belfry forms part of the skyline of historic Karlovac, set alongside the main square, Trg bana Josipa Jelačića. Devastated and destroyed during the two major conflicts of the 20th century here, World War II and the Croatian War of Independence, the church was completely rebuilt and reopened in 2007. Within, the wall of 74 carved wooden icons has been magnificently restored and merits a leisurely visit.

→ Vjekoslava Karasa

12 Visit the 1,000-exhibit Firefighters' Museum

A volunteer force formed in 1871, the Firefighters of Karlovac are treated with significant reverence. Only 15 years after the city was

founded in 1579, much of the town burned down. The streets of the historic centre were then laid out in such a way that fire could not cause so much damage again. But fires did break out, which is why mayor Dr Ivan Simunić established and equipped this vital local unit. Bright red vintage engines, strange-looking pumping machines and incongruously folksy uniforms line this expansive exhibition space, which backs onto an actual fire station.

→ Gazhanski trg 11 (facebook.com/Muzej-karlovačkog-vatrogastva-714242118692276)

13 See Croatia's first cinema

A somewhat sorry sight today, the Edison stands in urban parkland behind the city's main theatre. Built from 1918 to 1920, this was the first purpose-built cinema in the whole of Croatia, its size and comfort indicative of the importance of Karlovac as a whole. Showing talkies in the 1930s, films in Cinemascope from 1957, the Edison once contained five screening rooms but its popularity waned with the introduction home videos and focus on other priorities

during the 1990s. Today it's an empty shell, crying out for renovation and transformation of some kind – an expensive venture that no-one has yet seen fit to take on.

→ Kralja Tomislava 9I

14 Follow the travels of the Seljan brothers

The most unusual section of the Karlovac City Museum that fills the oldest preserved Baroque residential mansion in the historic centre, dating back to the 1600s, displays the exotic remnants relating to the travels of the Seljan brothers, Mirko and Stjepan. Born and educated in Karlovac, these intrepid explorers charted little-known areas of East Africa for the Emperor of Ethiopia before mapping great swathes of the Amazon rainforest. Mirko was last seen paddling up the Huayabamba river and is thought to have been eaten by cannibals. During their adventures, these pioneers collated plentiful artefacts, maps, photographs and drawings, and kept detailed diaries, some of which can be found here.

→ Trg Josipa Jurja Strossmayera 7 (047 615 980, gmk.hr)



Dubovac

15 Swim four rivers in one day

Starting with the Kupana, where Foginovo Beach has been a designated bathing spot for generations, a visitor keen on active sports may spend the day in the waters of the four rivers that meet at Karlovac. The Mrežnica is often tackled by teams of kayakers, the Dobra powers old mills further south and the Kupa has its source in the Risnjak National Park before flowing past the centre of Karlovac. Ask a trusty local, and he will tell you at which point you can swim in all four of these rivers by only diving in twice.

16 Sample Karlovačko beer in situ

Long before prominent nobleman Baron Nikola Vranyczany founded his major brewery at Dubovac in 1854, the clean, fast-flowing waters around Karlovac attracted enterprising locals to set up modest manufacturing spots close to the riverbanks. Using German and Austrian know-how, however, Baron Vranyczany established a brand that would become well known across the country. Today Karlovačko is one of Croatia's most widely consumed products, and the focus for August's ten-day beer festival that attracts some 100,000 thirsty visitors to the town. Once a month, the brewery also throws open its doors to provide ale aficionados with a tour, and an insight into brewing techniques. If you're sampling a beer afterwards,

try the Karlovačko Royal 1854, inspired by the original recipe than Baron Vranyczany would have approved.

17 Visit Croatia's first freshwater aquarium

There can be few better locations than Karlovac for a freshwater aquarium. Meeting place of four rivers, the Kupa, the Korana, the Mrežnica and the Dobra, this regional capital is also home to Aquatica, which follows its own course through underground tunnels. In these karst surroundings, you can observe how catfish, carp and trout behave in their natural environment. Seeing such biodiversity should also inspire younger visitors to

frequent their nearby waterways more – and respect them.

→ Branka Čavlovića Čavleka 1A (047 659 112, aquariumkarlovac.com)

18 Measure destinations from Karlovac – in old Germanic miles

One of the more bizarre sights you'll see around town, close to the city's main theatre, is the Miljokaz. A measuring stone, it lists a number of destinations with their distance, in miles, from this spot in the very heart of Karlovac. Zagreb, for example, is 7.5. The only problem is that these are old Germanic miles, Meile, and even these measures differed slightly across the main states that would later form Germany and Austria.

The Prussian mile was shorter than a Saxon one, and so on. Here the Austrian mile is used, also prevalent across southern Germany. The stone is thought to date back to the late 1700s.

19 Experience village life in one house

Part of the multi-site complex that is Karlovac City Museum, Vučjak is a traditional house in the village of the same name, where folk customs have been preserved from several generations ago. In similar vein, this bucolic wooden chalet is filled with furniture, tools and artefacts a peasant family would have been familiar with at the time. Beds, chests, clothes and textiles are all authentic remnants of a way of life no longer with us. While quaint and picturesque, it also depicts a home life that was free of most comfort and convenience.

20 Pay your respects to a place of pilgrimage

Once an old wooden church at the foot of Dubovac Castle hill, St Joseph's is now both a temple created in contemporary fashion between 1968 and 1974, and a national shrine. Protector and patron saint of Karlovac, St Joseph is celebrated on several days of the year here. These include the June anniversary of St Joseph being chosen by Parliament as protector of the Croatian people in 1687, and the first Sunday after September 15, when St Joseph's Church was first dedicated.

→ Dubovac 1 (047 417 031)



Korana



Korana



THE HOMETLAND WAR MUSEUM
KARLOVAC • TURANJ



GRADSKI
MUZEJ
KARLOVAC



For more information please visit
www.visitkarlovac.hr



RESTAURANTS

Caffe i Bistro Kupa

Oven-baked pizzas are the main attraction here, some 16 varieties prepared in three different sizes, including Slavonian with spicy kulen salami, vegetarian with courgettes and peppers, and the house Lička with various hams and salamis. Wok-fried dishes are a more recent introduction, and there's also stuffed scampi, fried scampi and grilled fish. All takes place in a neat, modern interior and prices are on the competitive side of affordable.
→ Obala Franje Račkog 4 (047 648 677).

Greencek Restaurant

The name a reference to this restaurant's location at the foot of the green housing block in the centre of Karlovac, with a park nearby along with the city's main baseball club, Greencek provides standard dishes to regulars at knock-down prices. Pastas, black risotto with squid ink, pizzas, steaks and pork loin all feature on

an extensive menu, along with grilled-meat and fish platters for two to four diners. Greencek also offers gableci, set lunches for local workers. A terrace operates in the warmer months.
→ Ulica Tadije Smičiklase 16 (047 629 020, greencek.com).

Kod Bakija

Out on the main road roughly halfway between Zagreb and the Plitvice Lakes, Kod Bakija is often used as a pleasant pit stop, even for an overnight stay as there are rooms also available. Food-wise there are few surprises, but what's offered is done well, the čevapčići, the grilled fish, the breaded meat and the shops. If there's spit-roasted lamb on that day, that's almost worth the detour from Karlovac alone. Otherwise, given the red-and-white checked tablecloths, domestic beers and wines, it's standard fare, served in friendly fashion. A large terrace and children's playground should allow the family to stretch their legs a bit after being cooped up in the car.
→ Jelaši ulica 41 (098 791 267).

Konoba Kostanjac

One of the most convivial choices in Karlovac, the Konoba Kostanjac near the Kupa river, just north of the historic centre, offers an authentic Dalmatian touch to the local gastronomic scene. Brodetto, octopus salad, squid, fresh sardines, cod broth, soparnik savoury pie with Swiss chard... you could be in Split but instead, you're in north-central Croatia, a short drive from Zagreb. This friendly rustic tavern is also a main local purveyor of artisanal ales and prime mover in the annual Craft Beer Fest Karlovac.
→ Draškovićeva 1 (047 613 740, facebook.com/kostanjac).

Konoba Zec

On the other side of the Kupa from the city centre, between the river and the railway station, the Zec Tavern is a reliable choice for grilled meats, fried mussels, squid and sardines – a reliable choice, in fact, for lashings of honest, homely Croatian food at affordable prices. Visitors may choose to dine in the rustic interior or the garden, where the kids can play on the swings

before the food arrives. For drinks, look no further than the huge tap of Bavarian Paulaner on the bar counter.
→ Ulica Mirka Bogovića 2 (047 645 455).

Lana Korana Restoran i Pub

Prominent in terms of location and local lore, the Lana Korana has been in place, tucked in from the river, surrounded by greenery, since 1964. Back then, this was the best hotel in town. Now it still shines, with its pool and fountain, extensive children's playground and huge terrace. Inside has been done out like an English pub but for most of the year, you can dine outside. On offer are standard Croatian and international dishes, professionally prepared and presented.
→ Koransko šetaliste 6 (047 600 813, lanakorana.hr/en/home-restaurant-pub-korana-karlovac-2).

Pizzeria Rustique

Despite the name, there are more than pizzas here – though, with 16 varieties to choose from in three different sizes, plus a DIY option, there's plenty of scope there.



Classic grilled meats not only cover the Balkan favourites of čevapčići and pljeskavica, but stuffed pork, and the hulking Plata Rustique, the kind of thing that would feature on one of those see-how-much-we-can-eat American TV shows. Order a day or so in advance, and you can even have the capable kitchen staff here prepare you and your dining companion veal, lamb or octopus ispod peke, slow-braised under a cooking bell surrounded by hot embers. All takes place in a pretty wooden chalet on an otherwise empty road that follows the other side of the Kupa from town – it's mainly regulars only.

→ Drženic 43 (047 417 290).

Pod starim krovovima

One of the most well-known restaurants in town as it's attached to the local trade and hospitality school, 'Under Old Rooves' stands close to the main square, near local and regional governmental institutions. As such, it's also popular with officials, who also use it for occasional promotional functions. The menu never strays too far from what young staff will be dealing with at many restaurants elsewhere around Croatia, but Pod Starimi Krovovi provides a pleasant, affordable meal to enjoy during or after a hard day's sightseeing.

→ Ulica Stjepana Radića 8-10 (047 615 420).

Restoran Dobra

One of two restaurants at the Hotel Korana-Srakovčić, the Dobra is also open to, in fact, popular with, non-residents too. A convivial covered terrace helps, with a view of the Korana river to boot. The hotel is a four-star, so standards are pretty high where its gastronomy is concerned, although the accent here is more on honouring tradition rather than breaking any culinary boundaries. Still, a solid choice, either for a romantic waterside dinner à deux or an informal business meeting.

→ Hotel Korana-Srakovčić, Perivoj Josipa Vrbanića 8 (047 609 090, hotelkorana.hr/gastronomija/11).

Restoran Kalvarija

On a narrow winding road west of Karlovac, the Kalvarija is a popular choice for family celebrations and social gatherings, its garden surrounded by greenery, its cosy interior warmed by a roaring fireplace in winter. With children regular visitors, the cake and dessert selection is excellent, its main dishes homely and familiar. The house turkey escalope, mushroom-filled and accompanied with vegetables, is a favourite. In winter, a warming plate of mlinci dried flatbread strips will be welcome reward for a morning's hike.

→ Vučjak 3 (098 699 001).

Restoran Kristal

Not a regular restaurant, rather multifunctional venue where a kitchen operates, with several different set menus featuring dishes such as breaded meat, filled turkey breast and hake. On the second floor of the Bakin Centre, on a main road just off the motorway between Zagreb and Rijeka, near the Karlovac turn-off.

→ Ulica Matka Laginje 1 (047 645 456, restoran-kristal.com).

Restoran Lovački Rog

Out on the old Zagreb road, north of Orlovac and 15 minutes' drive from Karlovac, Lovački Rog has been in operation since the 1950s. Taken over by the Petrić family in the early 2000s, the 'Hunting Horn' can accommodate some 300 people inside and out, making it a popular choice for wedding parties. If you've just driven in for a meal, take your time – the spacious garden is surrounded by oak woods. Quality game, veal and fish all can be recommended here, with a decent choice for vegetarians and excellent Croatian wines, for whoever's not behind the wheel.

→ Zagrebačka 146 (047 637 675, facebook.com/restoranlovackirog).

Restoran Mandić

Mandić family tradition here goes way back – to 1983, as far as the restaurant is concerned, and 1980 when talking about the butcher's in the same clan. Thus the meat is first-rate, ideally ordered as part of a classic platter with ajvar tomato-and-pepper condiment to accompany, and vegetables. All feels very sturdy, the brick-and-tiled-floor surrounds – as if the Mandić could go on for another 35



Restoran Kalvarija

ON OUR RADAR

Bistro Kastel ★★★★★

Set in the medieval castle of Dubovac, home to the famed Napoleonic Irish military commander Laval Nugent von Westmeath, the Bistro Kastel offers a menu that aptly reflects local gastronomic heritage and makes best use of produce sourced from in and around Karlovac. Here, you'll sit openair, in the courtyard of the castle, a charming location also sometimes used for music concerts and festivals. Hearty meats and soups come with delicious home-made bread – the steak and ribs are both outstanding, thanks not least to the careful sourcing of high quality meats, so do leave room. Bistro Kastel is not so formal that you can't ask for a hamburger, or a plate of chicken nuggets for any younger diners and there were a large amount of enticing vegetarian options available on our last visit, both as part of the standard menu and within the daily specials. There's a really good wine list, too, and a nice selection of craft beers, at least one of which is made locally.

→ Zagrad gaj 5 (047 658 922, facebook.com/bistrokastel).



Pod Švarčom ★★★★★

Operated by the same family for the last 20 years, Pod Švarčom stands just outside the city centre, on the main road south to Senj. It's a carnivores' paradise where meat, sourced from selected local producers, is expertly prepared on a charcoal grill. The house-style steak involves it being stuffed with crunchy smoked ham, Pag cheese and peppers, and placed on a bed of rocket with toasted pine nuts and a spicy sauce. Steak, in fact, is a speciality, the meat hung and aged, then lathered in green-pepper or truffle-and-mushroom sauce. Spit-roasted suckling pig or lamb is also popular and those planning ahead for a group visit should consider ordering veal, turkey, lamb or octopus ispod peke, prepared for several hours under a cooking bell covered in hot embers (advanced booking of such specialised dishes is recommended). There's seafood too, monkfish, trout, squid and tuna, embellished with several tried and trusted sauces. A daily menu, available until 3pm, lists an extensive selection of domestic favourites in the 30kn range.

→ Senjska ulica 63 (047 431 120, restoran-podšvarcom.com.hr).



Restoran Kvaka ★★★★★

A lovely experience this, overlooking the River Kupa, close to the historic and ecclesiastical landmarks of Dubovac. You seriously will not want to leave this restaurant and its stunning views, a huge length of the tree-lined river extending away into the horizon, small boats moored on the side, bobbing in the waters. There's plenty to choose from on the menu, including whichever fish happens to be fresh that day, dentex, bream or John Dory. If the pair of you are meat-eaters and hungry, then the Kvaka platter with chicken, pork loin, čevapi and other grilled delights should do the trick. You're also close enough to Istria for fužipasta twists to make an appearance, here served with smoked salmon and capers. The restaurant makes its own fresh pasta (and bread), which is a delight and there are hearty, authentic and spicy dishes, such as fiš paprikaš or čobanac, on the menu which are extremely rare to find cooked this well outside of their native Slavonia. It's worth mentioning the desserts, particularly the pancakes – there's a dark chocolate one, invented by the owner, which is unique and very prettily presented. The daily offer during the week starts at 9am and finishes at 1pm, so get here quick for your 28-kuna bargain meals.

→ Žorovica ulica 3 (047 416 616).



years or more, in fact. Closed on Mondays, to give the family, and the friendly staff, a well-earned weekly breather.

→ Jamadolska ulica 2A (047 415 490, restoran-mandic.hr).

Restoran Panorama

After a leisurely browse around the market, head up to the second floor of the same complex for a fish dish or plate of pasta at Panorama. The name's justified, as you do get a fine view of Karlovac – perhaps handy if it's your first day here and you want to get your bearings – and, as at the market, prices are more than friendly. Unless you're devouring the house Four Rivers Steak wrapped in bacon with green noodles in wine-and-cream sauce and roast potatoes, you'll be hard-pressed to spend more than 100 kuna a head, with a glass of wine or beer included. As for dessert, unless you have had the steak

with all the trimmings, you might want to explore the 20-strong pancake selection, including the Panorama with cream and peaches or apricots.

→ Trg Josipa Broza 2 (047 411 374, panorama.com.hr).

Šu Šu Gastro Pub

A restaurant, pizzeria, café, weekend nightspot and lodgings in one, Šu Šu opens at 6.30am during the week and closes at 3am, after the last live act packs up of a Friday, and the DJ spins his last tune of a Saturday. In other words, this is one of those places in Karlovac that gives the 24-hour clock its best shot. A place where you're sure to meet friendly locals, not least the family who run it, meals or even just a drink should, if possible, be taken outside on the wooden terrace, a great place to while away the hours at whatever time of day. As for the food, Šu Šu treads the

well-worn path of pizzas, pastas and risottos, with burgers thrown in and it excels in all. It is also one of the best (if only) places in the town centre where you can find an excellent cooked breakfast, with perfectly poached eggs, omelettes, mini breakfast pizzas, high quality sausages and salads on offer.

Note also the star-shaped pizza in honour of the town's heritage and the soon-to-open boutique hotel attached, its existing rooms much in-demand from people visiting the nearby Plitvice lakes or on bicycle or motorcycle jaunts.

→ Nazorova 4 (047 600 214, facebook.com/susupub).

SuperGrill Kod Sladića

Every Croatian town has one and Karlovac is no different – a cheap, honest and reliable place for grilled meat. Naturally, čevapčići and pljeskavice fly out of the kitchen, rissoles and huge meat patties

served with a side of diced onions and ajvarcondiment, plus a blanket of flatbread, but you'll also find pljeskavice stuffed with cheese, chicken and pork chops. Order the meat platter to try a bit of everything – and choose a terrace table to avoid having to smell like a Balkan kitchen for the rest of the day. Cash only.

→ Ulica Janka Draškovića 3 (047 600 542, facebook.com/supergrikkodsladica).

Tiffany Pizzeria

Between the town's main theatre and the Kupa river, Tiffany is a popular choice because of its location and its capacity to accommodate large groups out on the terrace. Although called a pizzeria, it's more than that, serving grilled meats, fish, squid and all-round family favourites. Meats also come breaded, covered in mushroom sauce and can be accompanied with a glass or two of house red. All in all, handy, homely and reliable.

→ Ulica Dr Vlatka Mačeka 6 (047 614 666).



Šu Šu Gastro Pub

ON OUR RADAR

Restoran M90 ★★★★★

Also on the road north from Karlovac, a little closer to town, the M90 is a nice little eatery to visit in both summer and winter. Perhaps slightly underwhelming upon approach, fear not, because M90's full charms are revealed once inside, where there's enough space for some three-dozen diners in the main building and another 50 in the winter garden. Sadly closed on Sundays, it still lends itself to a long, lazy meal, particularly if you book a peka dish the day before. Slow-cooked under hot coals are lamb and octopus, but also mains such as monkfish, which are rarely prepared this way. The seafood selection for grilling or frying is equally tempting, squid in wine, dentex, bream and John Dory, while steak-in-ham, pork lungić or veal in a stunningly flavoursome cream and mushroom sauce will satisfy the carnivores. Given the southern Dalmatian touches elsewhere on the menu, paštica stewed beef and so on, it's no surprise to see rožata among desserts, a kind of Dubrovnik crème brûlée. Pick out an Istrian wine from the extensive and brilliantly chosen selection, or ask for a recommendation; the hosts are super-friendly, knowledgeable and enthusiastic.

→ Zagrebačka (047 637 644, restoran-m90.com.hr).



River Pub ★★★★★

Close to the river and, indeed, pub-like, this mainstay of Karlovac nightlife is spacious enough for its bare-brick interior to contain three pool tables but once the evening kicks in, chances are that it'll get too crowded to use them. This is one of the few places in Karlovac when you can actually prop up the bar and, around the weekend, customers will be standing two or three deep. There's a slightly rock touch to proceedings, hence the guitars and retro drinks ads on display, plus the range of decent whiskies. The terrace is equally busy, and the draught Karlovac flows like the nearby Kupa in summer.

→ Ulica Petra Preradovića 10 (047 638 698, facebook.com/riverpubkarlovac).

Hotel Korana-Srakovčić ★★★★★

Best hotel in town, this heritage boutique four-star overlooks the Korana river, within easy reach of the aquarium. Built in 1908, it still exudes a certain Habsburg charm and, indeed, intimacy, with only 12 doubles, three deluxe rooms and three suites, each named after a flower. Some have balconies, either overlooking the water or the greenery of Vrbanic Park. Guests are pampered with a pool and spa, both open until 11pm, along with two restaurants, a cocktail bar and a summer terrace. Nearby are not only the beach, a ten-minute walk away, but a tennis club, children's playground and ample verdant recreation. All you need, in fact, for an active and/or relaxing stay close to the city centre.

→ Perivoj J Vrbanica 8 (047 609 090, hotelkorana.hr).



BARS & CAFFES

Amadeus Caffe

A convenient place to watch sport or plot up on the terrace overlooking a narrow street, all lived-in and surrounded by dark wood inside and out. Has been known to stage live music, hence the vinyl records on the walls, but by day it's mainly used by menfolk after that first beer and umpteenth cigarette as a reward for walking the dog.

→ Banjavčičeva 2 (092 303 5690).

Caffe Bar Antonio

Close to the riverbank and the sights of the historic centre, Antonio comprises an extensive terrace that catches the sun during the day, and an interior large enough to contain a separate room for pool tables. This is also a popular spot to watch the

match, and is used by the city's motorcycling fraternity. Bottled Paulaner and Staropramen provide an alternative to Karlovačko on draught.

→ Šebetičeva 1 (047 611 600, facebook.com/cafebarantonio1987).

Caffe Bar Hollywood

Spreading out over a pedestrianised space near the river, the terrace at Hollywood is another recommendable spot to order a pint of freshly poured Paulaner and watch the world go by. There are plenty of other bottled options too, and the TV screens football when it matters.

→ Ulica Dr Vladka Mačeka 14 (047 611 555).

Caffe bar Palma

Part of the Kristal complex with a restaurant of the same name, Palma is more of a café and confectionery where hot food and cheap midday meals are also available. Freshly squeezed juices are always a nice find, also

the domestic cakes, pastries and ice creams. A neat interior is portioned into separate half-moon seating units for comfort and intimacy. It's just outside the city centre, near the motorway turn off for Zagreb or Rijeka.

→ Ulica Matka Laginje 1 (047 645 320, restoran-kristal.com/cafe-bar-palma).

Catalpa Lounge Bar

Greenery and sunshine generally surround this extensive, stand-alone terrace, served from a sizeable bar where unplugged performers often set up on Fridays. TV football also entertains. The coffee is decent, popular brands of spirits also feature as well as international beers by the bottle such as Beck's and Corona.

→ Ulica Stjepana Radića (095 455 5009).

Cohiba

Invariably one of the busiest places in town, family-friendly Cohiba sits in verdant parkland a few steps from the Kupa river. There's

plenty of space outside for the kids to run around while the grown-ups sip Stretto coffee and take the weight off their feet. After dark, the mood becomes more party-focused, with colourful lights and occasionally a DJ selecting tunes from their laptop.

→ Šetalište Franje Tuđmana 4 (091 641 5230, hr-hr.facebook.com/caffe.cohiba).

Gradska Straža

One of the city's much-frequented terraces, this one is located right on the narrow thoroughfare that winds its way through the centre of Karlovac, Radićeva. Whatever the time of day, whoever's sat outside will be greeting a passing friend or acquaintance at some point. After dark, 'the City Guard' becomes an essential stop-off on any Radićeva bar crawl.

→ Ulica Stjepana Radića 32 (047 601 420).

Green Bar

Attached to the Greencek restaurant, the Green Bar echoes



Papa's Bar

the same colour scheme, its terrace a key summer haunt in the heart of town. Inside, a simple interior is equipped with a TV and a scattering of half-moon chairs usually occupied by a particularly younger clientele. The choice of bottled beers here is extensive, with Slovene Laško and Union, and sought-after Croatian Velebitsko and Zmajska lining the shelves of the well-stocked fridge.

→ Ulica Tadije Smičiklase 16 (047 417 235, facebook.com/greenbar.karlovac).

Kazališna Kavana

Near the Zorin Dom, the city's main stage for dramatic performance, the Kazališna Kavana ('Theatre Café') has gone far beyond its remit of providing drinks for audience members before or after the show. A key venue for summer's

annual Kakafe cultural festival, the Kazališna Kavana stages live music most of the year round – in fact, it's the city's main host of rock, pop and other genres. Out on the terrace, a screen is set up for big football tournaments.

→ Domobraska 1 (091 254 6254).

Papa's Bar

Its sun-dappled terrace spread under the shade of a large old tree, Papa's Bar doesn't overdo the Hemingway theme. Rather, it provides Karlovac with one of its main party destinations, with 3am closing at weekends. It's a live venue, too, with DJ sessions also scheduled. Given the name/theme, you'll find a few Latin brands among the standard Croatian beers and spirits.

→ Šetalište Franje Tuđmana 1 (047 615 330, facebook.com/papasbar).

Promenada

At the edge of one of the city's many downtown parks, Promenada attracts couples, families and old locals who've gone out for a stroll behind the theatre. Nearby stand the statue of 19th-century historian Radoslav Lopašić and the Miljokaz measuring stone carved out in German miles. These Habsburg-era landmarks lend a timeless feel as you sit on the terrace and listen to the birdsong over a coffee or standard domestic beer.

→ Šetalište Franje Tuđmana 10 (047 600 240).

Pub D

One of the town's main live venues, although it doesn't stray too far from the confines of the rock or blues genres, Pub D appeals to an older generation who want to go out and have themselves a real

good time. Images of pre-punk rock icons line the walls and this is also one of the few places in Karlovac to serve a decent pint of Guinness. If you're in town on St Patrick's Day, look no further.

→ Šebetičeva 3 (095 369 5868).

Ray bar & club

A busy bar day and night, set in the main alfresco drinking hub between the historic centre and the river. Regulars gather on the large terrace under a branded canopy or in the lively interior, its walls decorated with framed album covers. Occasionally there's a live act, often there's football and almost always, there's an underlying sense of fun. They know how to mix a cocktail, too.

→ Ivana Gundulića 2 (047 615 415, facebook.com/living.karlovac).

HOTELS

Florian & Godler

Opened in 2019, Florian & Godler is a 32-roomed and thoroughly modern luxury boutique hotel in the town centre. There's a mini wellness area with Turkish and Finnish sauna, a relaxation room, jacuzzi and more in this sleekly-designed conversion. → Banija ul. 15 (047 640 138)

Hotel Carlstadt

Central and simple, the Carlstadt stands one block in from the Kupa river, close to at least half-a-dozen terrace cafés and the historic centre. It has its own bar, the 047, set out on the pavement, as well as a restaurant. Rooms, 37 of them,

are modest but suffice for a short stay, with the option of a single, a twin, a double or a triple. Be aware that there's no lift, so if you're laden down with luggage, there could be three floors to negotiate. On the plus side, breakfast is substantial and included in the price.

→ Ambroza Vranyczanya 1 (047 611 111, carlstadt.hr).

Hotel Europa

On the northern outskirts of town by the motorway linking Zagreb and Rijeka, the Europa isn't as convenient for a city break in Karlovac as its limited competitors – which is a shame, as this mid-range lodging was thoroughly renovated in the winter of 2018/19. Facilities include a gym, sauna and jacuzzi, a restaurant and bar, as

well as in-house parking. There's a large supermarket nearby – everything else is just over the river, a ten-minute taxi journey away.

→ Banija 161 (047 609 666, hotel-europa.com.hr).

Hostel Na putu

The first of its kind in Karlovac, Na putu is a comfortable, contemporary hostel set in a Baroque mansion that dates back 200 years. WiFi, coffee, linen and towels are all free, there's no curfew and check-out is a relaxing 11 am. Guests may also make use of the kitchen. The hostel reception is manned for four hours every morning and late afternoon and there's no different in price between dormitories, five-, seven- or eight-bed. Summer is 15kn dearer than winter and the hostel

operates year-round. → Trg bana Petra Zrinskog 17 (047 296 235, hostelnaputu.net).

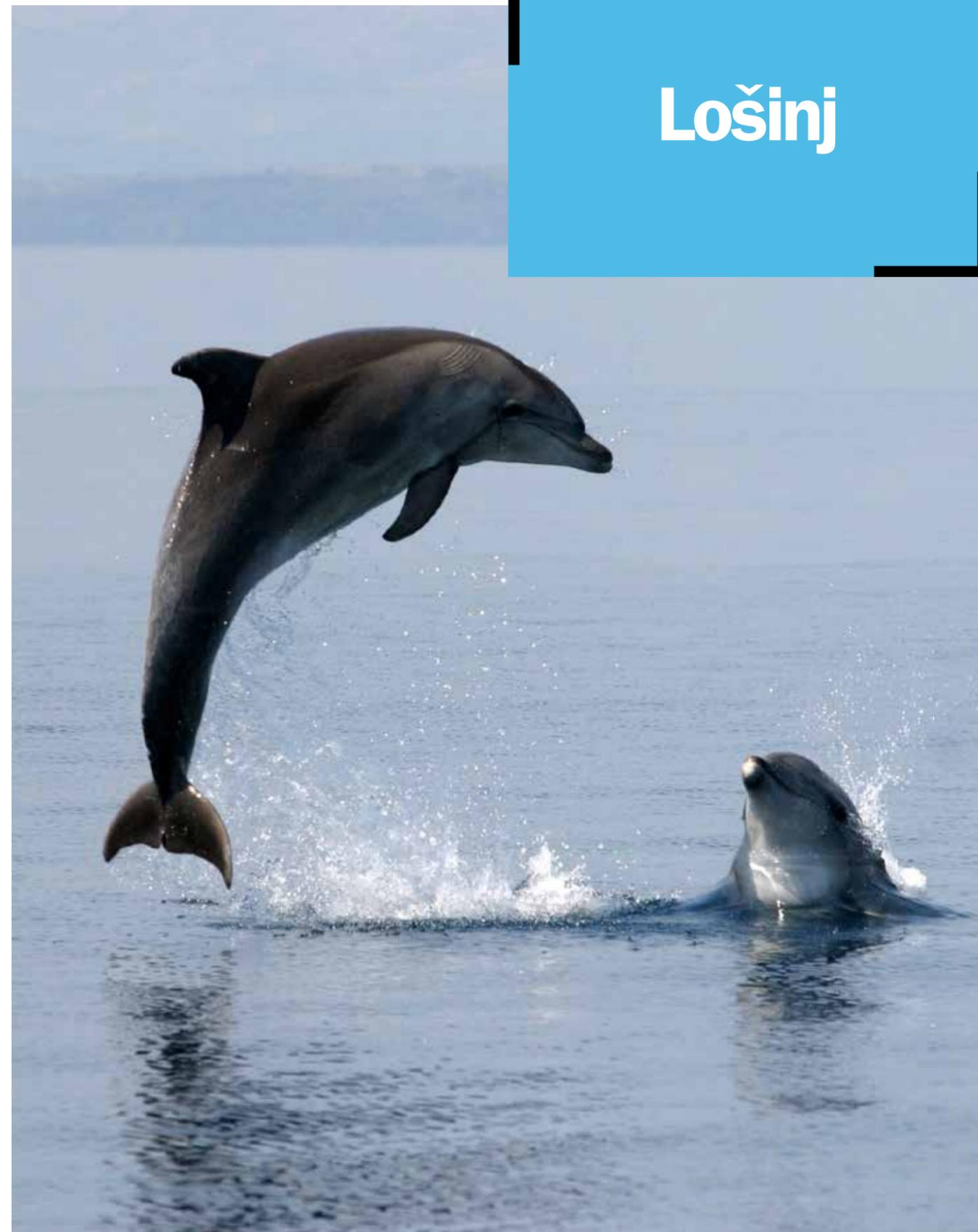
Rooms The Frog

Ignoring the silly name, Rooms The Frog occupies a multi-purpose building done out in lurid pink and green. Below is a furniture store, alongside, the excellent family-run restaurant Pod Švarčom. All is a ten-minute walk south of the city centre. Rooms are simple, comfortable, modern and affordable, with plenty of adjoining parking space. Only one snag, really, and that's the strict reception hours of 2pm-9pm – any arrival time or request before or after, and you'll have to make special arrangements by calling the mobile number.

→ Senjska ulica 63A (091 611 7181, roomsthefrog.business.site).



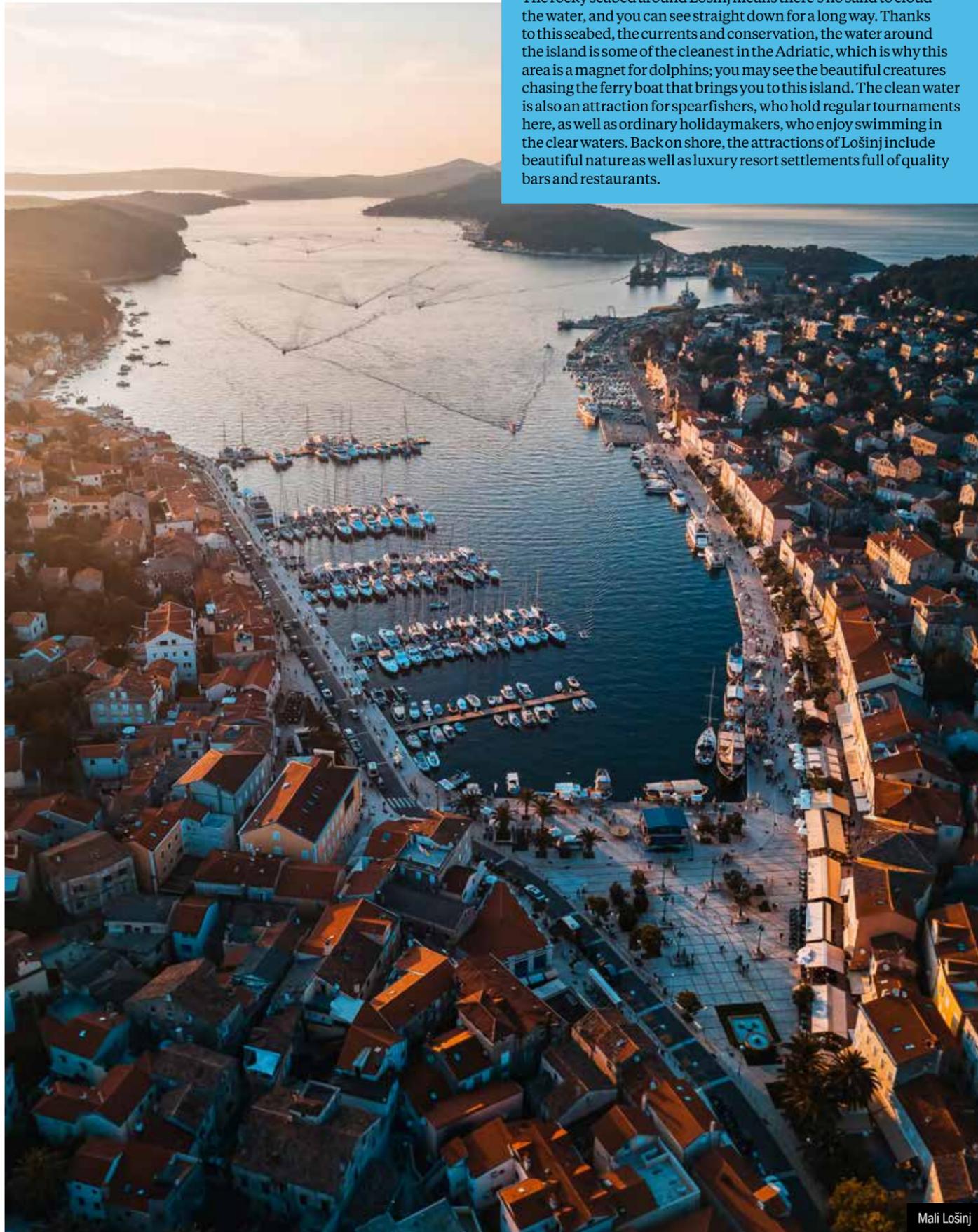
Florian & Godler



Lošinj

THE LOWDOWN: Lošinj

The rocky seabed around Lošinj means there's no sand to cloud the water, and you can see straight down for a long way. Thanks to this seabed, the currents and conservation, the water around the island is some of the cleanest in the Adriatic, which is why this area is a magnet for dolphins; you may see the beautiful creatures chasing the ferry boat that brings you to this island. The clean water is also an attraction for spearfishers, who hold regular tournaments here, as well as ordinary holidaymakers, who enjoy swimming in the clear waters. Back on shore, the attractions of Lošinj include beautiful nature as well as luxury resort settlements full of quality bars and restaurants.



Mali Lošinj



Direct flights to the island of Lošinj

Lošinj has never been closer to you.

Situated in the North Adriatic where the sea is the bluest and deepest, Island of Lošinj will take your breath away with its uncompromising beauty and uniqueness - amazing nature, untouched coast, numerous bays, charming villages, footpaths, thousands of aromatic and healing herbs and exclusive wellness offer in its hotels and villas.



Venice - Lošinj - Venice

*55' flight, twice a week
(Monday and Friday)*

Lugano - Lošinj - Lugano

*1h40' flight, twice a week
(Wednesday and Saturday)*

Zagreb - Lošinj - Zagreb

*50' flight, 3 times a week
(Tuesday, Friday and Sunday)*

To find out more about flights, offers and hotels, please visit

losinj-hotels.com
silverairtravels.com

or contact us by email

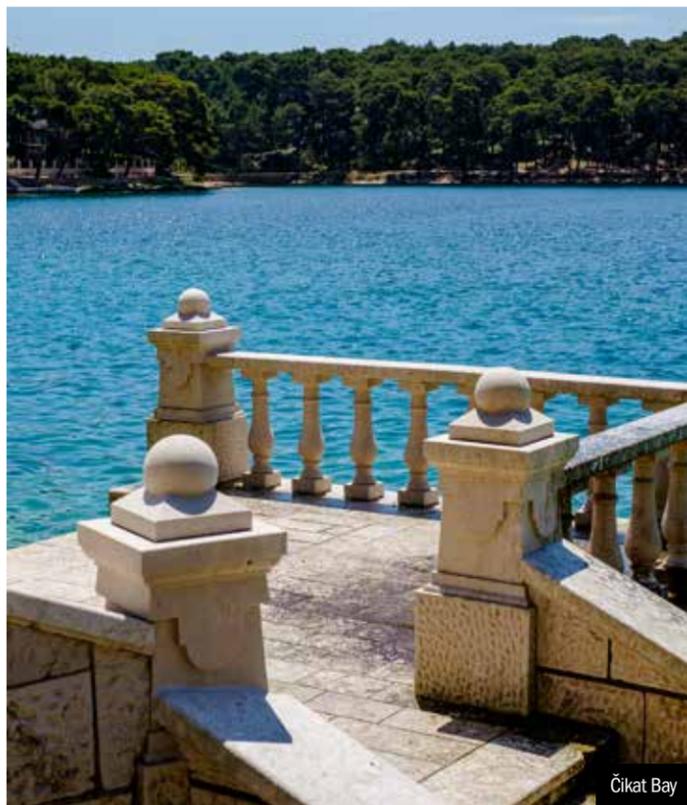
booking@losinj-hotels.com
info@silverairtravels.com

**LOŠINJ
HOTELS
& VILAS**

CROATIA



Mali Lošinj



Čikat Bay

INTRODUCING LOŠINJ

Cres and Lošinj used to be one island until the ancient Liburni tribe dug a canal at Osor. The healthy effects of its sea breezes, clean water and 2,600 hours of annual sunshine earned Lošinj an official designation as a health resort in 1892. Habsburg royalty followed and now tourism is the island's main industry. Activity centres around two towns with misleading labels. Mali Lošinj, 'Small Lošinj', is the bigger settlement, about four kilometres from quaint little Veli Lošinj, 'Great Lošinj'. Mali Lošinj, the largest island town in the Adriatic, with a population of 7,000, is set around a long, wide harbour, lined with Habsburg-era facades. Strolling from one end of the harbour to the other takes 20 minutes – it's a nice waterside lined with great restaurants and bars. Trg Republike Hrvatske is the big square. Pop into the Art Collections modern Croatian pieces as well as Italian art works from the 17th and 18th centuries. The Museum of Apoxyomenos is one of Croatia's cultural highlights.

There are good beaches near Mali Lošinj, including the popular rocky and pebbly stretches in wooded Čikat, just on the other side of a hill from the harbour. The Čikat bay features luxury hotels Bellevue and the smaller, boutique Alhambra with destination Japanese restaurant Matsunoki and their flagship Alfred Keller.

Neighbouring Veli Lošinj is centred around a small harbour surrounded by steep hills. On one rise, right on the harbour, is the boxy pink church of St Anthony, which contains seven Baroque altars and works by Italian masters. The sinners hang out down below, in a bustling clutch of good bars and restaurants. On another hill above the harbour is a crenulated Venetian tower, built as a fortification in 1455 and used for exhibitions. Walk along a ridge above the beach for the other harbour, tiny Rovenska: three restaurants and a pebbly beach. The Marine Education Centre in Veli Lošinj promotes conservation with a special focus on the nearby bottlenose dolphin colony.

TIMELESS LUXURY FOR
DREAM-COME-TRUE HOLIDAYS

1912

EXPERIENCE SPECIAL MOMENTS AT THE LUXURIOUS BOUTIQUE HOTEL ALHAMBRA WHERE A CENTURY OLD TRADITION OF PERFECT HOLIDAYS MEETS CONTEMPORARY TRENDS – TANTALISINGLY REFINED GASTRONOMY AND SUPREME SELECTION OF WINES RECOGNISED BY THE GAULT&MILLAU GUIDE, IMPECCABLY ELEGANT AND COMFORTABLE INTERIOR, AND DREAMY PRIVATE BEACH SETTLED IN AN UNTOUCHED AND FRAGRANT ENVIRONMENT. DISCOVER THE TRUE MEANING OF YOUR DREAM-COME-TRUE HOLIDAY ON THE ISLAND OF LOŠINJ.

BOOK NOW:
www.lošinj-hotels.com



ALHAMBRA
BOUTIQUE HOTEL LOŠINJ

ISLAND OF LOŠINJ · CROATIA · TEL. +385.51.661.101 · ALHAMBRA@LOSINJ-HOTELS.COM · WWW.LOSINJ-HOTELS.COM



Sea Change



Lošinj has always been famous as an island of health cures and recuperation. A splurge of recent investment by local hotel company Lošinj Hotels & Villas has transformed this idyllic green getaway into the leading wellness destination in the Adriatic.

SPREAD ACROSS a low hillside just above Veli Lošinj is a set of dry-stone terraces covered in pungent clumps of sage, rosemary, lavender, oregano, thyme, and yellow-flowered and spicy smelling immortelle. A stone gardener's hut displays soaps, essential oils and liqueurs made from the herbs, although simply breathing the garden's air is intoxicating enough. Lošinj's Fragrant Island Garden (Miomirisni otočki vrt) is the perfect introduction to an island that has long been celebrated for its health-giving properties, thanks to a uniquely wide range of Mediterranean fauna and a specific microclimate that combines salty sea air with mild temperatures. Not for nothing does Lošinj call itself the 'island of vitality'. The island is a form of therapy in itself, and you are indulging in the benefits of health tourism simply by breathing the air.

We often imagine that travel is capable of delivering a transformational effect, sending us home healthier, more energized, or more at peace with ourselves than we were when we left. This green island in the northern Adriatic is one of those rare destinations that might actually fulfill this promise. Famous as a health resort at the end of the 19th century, Lošinj is reemerging with renewed vigour as one of the Adriatic's leading destinations for health, fitness and spa tourism.

It was the popular search for recuperative health cures that led to Lošinj's emergence as a health resort in the late 19th century.

Hotel Aurora

Lošinj

The clean, slightly salty quality of the air made it ideal for sufferers of lung infections, breathing difficulties and asthma. Local botanist Ambroz Haračić produced a thorough study of the island's flora and climate, inducing the authorities in Vienna to officially declare Lošinj a health-cure resort in 1892. One of its most famous patients was TB-suffering heir to the throne Archduke Franz Ferdinand, who spent six reinvigorating weeks here in autumn 1895. Emperor Franz Joseph built a villa for his wife, the Empress Elizabeth, in Mali Lošinj, although her assassination in 1898 prevented her from ever making use of it. Most of the island's guests were members of the Viennese or Budapest middle classes, staying in small pensions and privately owned sanatoria – Lošinj was considered a quiet, soothing alternative to the high-society hubbub of Opatija.

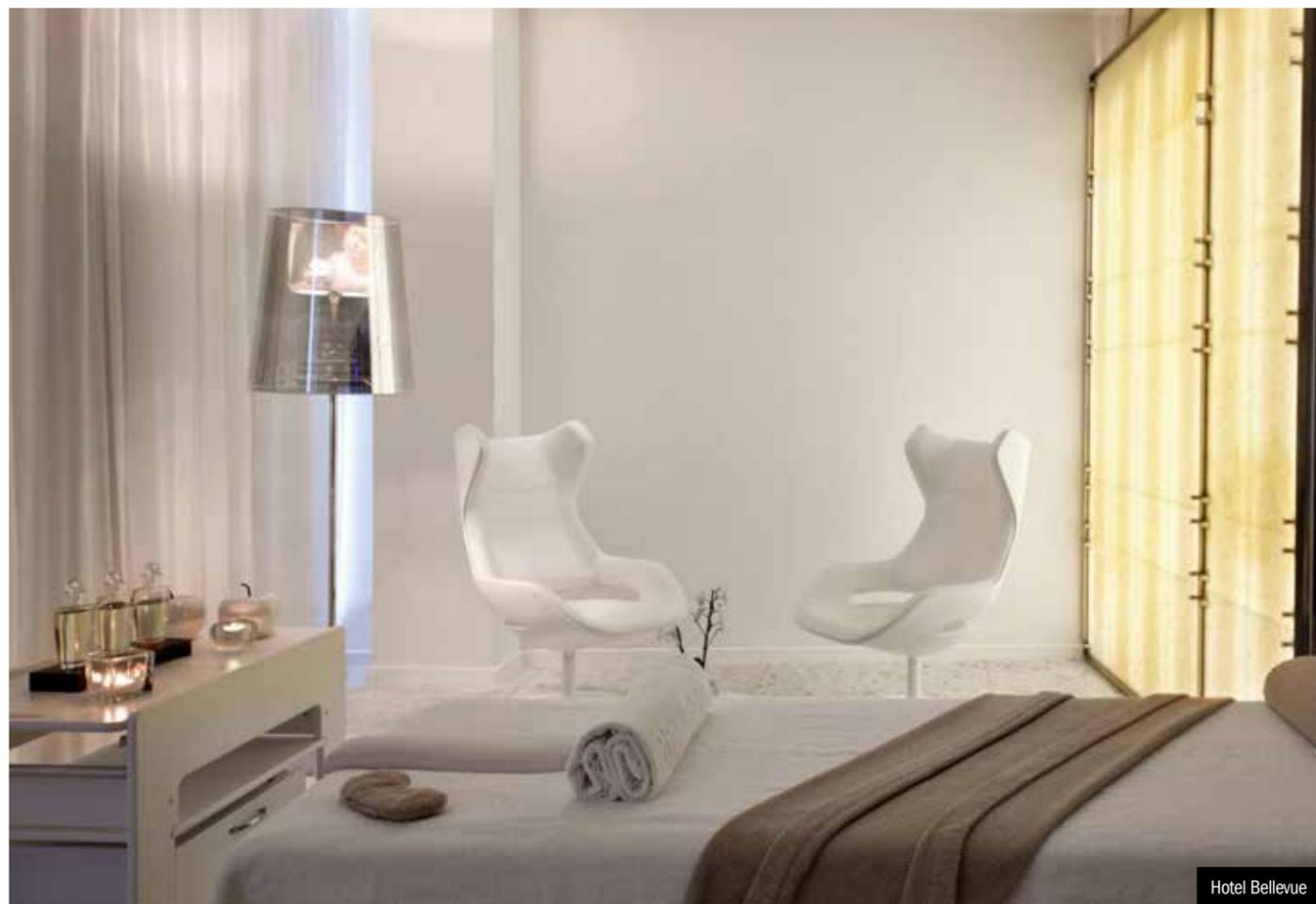
Throughout the 70s and 80s of the last century Lošinj was one of the Croatian coast's most successful package resorts. The infrastructure was first class, the beaches excellent, but the hitherto central role of health tourism had been set to one side. In recent years however the local hotel industry has undergone a spectacular transformation, with the renovation and upgrading of its hotels and a renewed focus on the things that made Lošinj famous in the first place. Lošinj's



Hotel Bellevue

main hotel company, Lošinj Hotels & Villas, has subjected its accommodation stock to a spectacular modernization drive, with the Sixties-era quadrangle of the Hotel Bellevue reinvented as a swish designer retreat. With nearby Habsburg-era Hortensia and Alhambra also benefiting from luxury makeovers, Lošinj has agilely re-positioned itself as the leading spa destination in the northern Adriatic.

The main resort area of Lošinj is Čikat, a winding coastline of clear-sea beaches overlooked by seaside promenades. The whole area was forested in the 1880s on the initiative of Lošinj's local council, eager to transform Čikat into a health-tourism suburb protected from harsh winds and intense sunshine. Many of Čikat's Habsburg-era villas have been lovingly restored, alongside a modern hotel that



Hotel Bellevue



The art of healthy breathing

BOOK NOW:
www.losinj-hotels.com

T. +385 (0)51 662 000 · F. +385 (0)51 236 301 · punta@losinj-hotels.com

Lošinj Hotels & Villas | Dražica 1, HR-51550 Mali Lošinj · T. +385 (0)51 66 11 11 · F. +385 (0)51 231 904 · booking@losinj-hotels.com

Lošinj Hotels & Villas



Hotel Aurora

has been fully refurbished during a renovation spree. The sports facilities are second to none – when it comes to tennis courts, Čikat has some of the most attractive in Croatia.

Both the 4-star Aurora and 5-star Bellevue have swimming pools fed by health-restoring seawater, as well as saunas and Turkish baths. Spa facilities at the Aurora include an extensive wellness centre which cultivates a philosophy of providing each client with individual attention and a personally tailored programme. There are ample possibilities for both indoor and outdoor massage – the Apoxyomenos massage, named after the island’s famous Greco-Roman statue, comes with specially selected essential oils.

For a more committed programme of personal wellbeing consider staying in nearby Veli Lošinj, where the 4-star Hotel Punta offers a range of vacation packages involving walking, cycling, yoga and “floatfit” – a series of workout sessions that take place in a specially adapted pool. Fully equipped indoor gyms offer spinning, aerobics and antigravity training; the latter involves doing yoga-like exercises in slings suspended from the ceiling. Several of the programmes come with serious medical intent: Re-spiro helps clear the lungs with breathing exercises, fitness workouts and plenty of Lošinj’s famously restorative sea air. Head to the hotel’s breakfast room and you’ll find a wealth of health-conscious options, with gluten-free foodstuffs a priority.



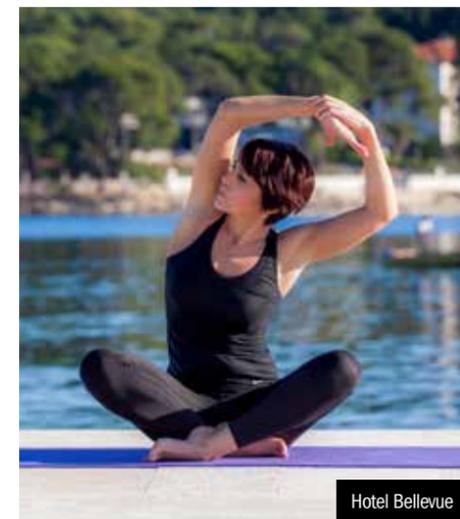
Vitality Hotel Punta



Vitality Hotel Punta



Boutique Hotel Alhambra



Hotel Bellevue



EXPLORE AWARDED PLACE OF LUXURY IN CROATIA

Hidden in the midst of a centennial pine forest, a few steps from the crystal clear sea, Hotel Bellevue is a place to be enjoyed at all times of the year. The healing climate of island of Lošinj and superior offer of health & beauty treatments at hotel’s Spa Clinic, provide unique environment for intimate, luxurious moments of relaxation.

BOOK NOW:
www.losinj-hotels.com

Island of Lošinj · Croatia · T. +385 (0)51 661 101 · bellevue@losinj-hotels.com · www.losinj-hotels.com

The Lošinj Apoxyomenos

Recent years have seen the island of Lošinj reinvent itself as a contemporary cultural destination, thanks in large part to the opening of Croatia's most talked-about new attraction, the Museum of the Apoxyomenos.



AN AMBITIOUS clutch of spanking new museums has changed the face of Croatian tourism over the last few years; none, however, has been quite so talked about as the Museum of the Apoxyomenos in Mali Lošinj. Devoted to a single Greco-Roman statue of a handsome young athlete, the museum weaves a beguiling narrative around this uniquely charismatic piece of bronze, all presented in electrifying, state-of-the-art style.

The name Apoxyomenos is an ancient Greek term meaning something like 'The Scraper', a reference to the habit of athletes of cleansing their skin with a scraping tool known as a strigil. The subject was a common one among

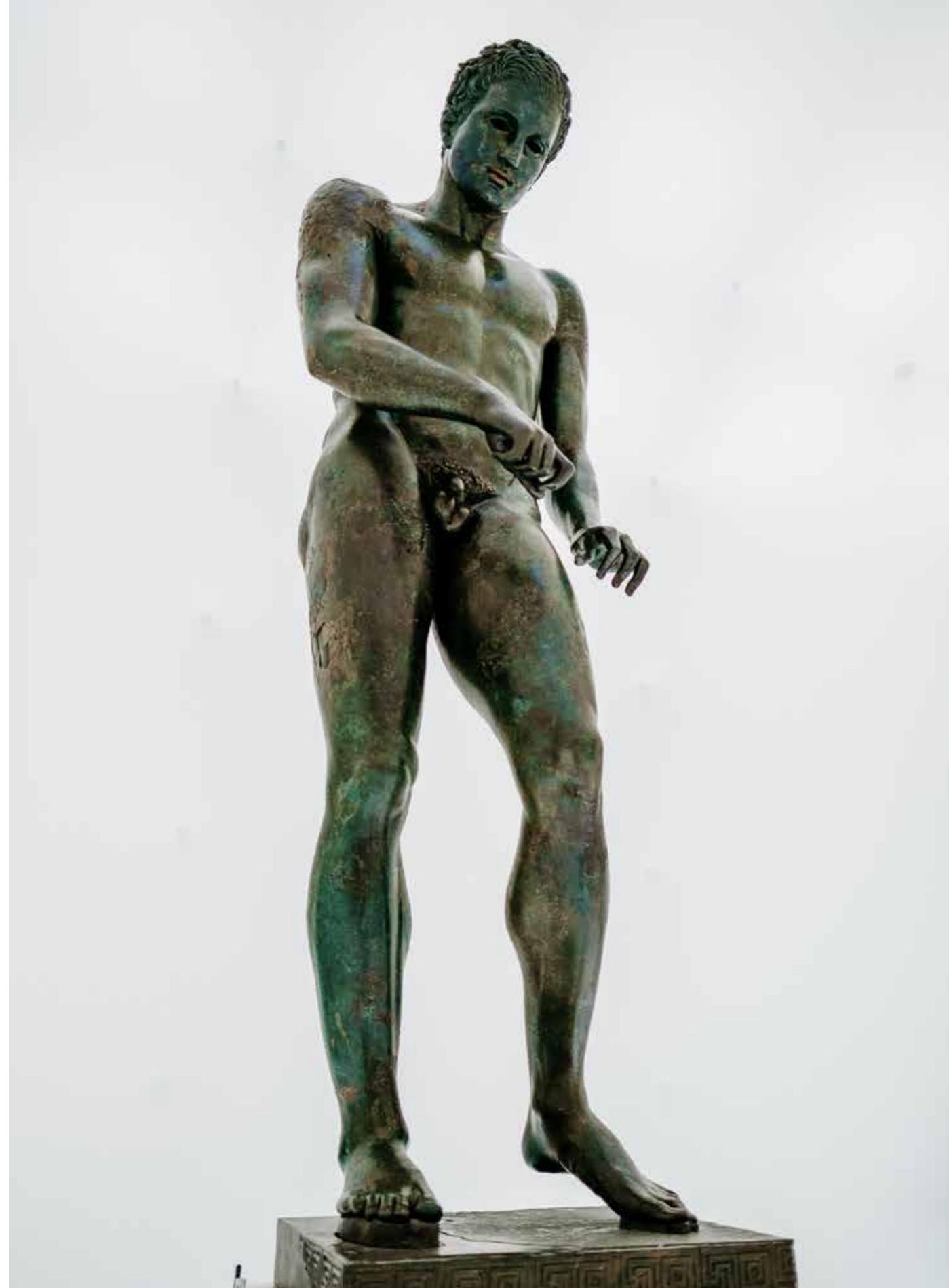
classical sculptors, although only a handful of Hellenistic-era copies survive. There are Apoxyomenos statues in Rome, Vienna and Florence, although it's the Lošinj Apoxyomenos that is considered the most perfect example of the genre yet found. Only the strigil is missing, leaving the statue in an ambiguous open-handed posture that if anything makes it even more compelling.

The discovery of the Apoxyomenos, cast into the Adriatic near Lošinj over 2000 years ago, is an object lesson in how it pays to keep your eyes peeled when exploring the sea bottom. The sponge- and barnacle-covered bronze hunk was first spotted by vacationing Belgian scuba-diver

Rene Wouten in 1996; it took the authorities a further 3 years to bring it to the surface. The statue was sent to expert restoration departments in Florence and then Zagreb. It took three years of patient fiddling to remove the encrustations, and a metal skeleton was built inside the statue's body in order to help it hold its shape.

So what exactly was the Apoxyomenos doing on the seabed near Lošinj?

Grains found in the stomach of a mouse trapped inside the Apoxyomenos's interior helped archeologists date the statue to the first century BC. It was a time when the Eastern Adriatic was a much-used trade route, its plethora



of islands allowing captains to avoid the open sea and hop instead from port to port. There were plenty of rich Roman villas in the northern Adriatic, and it is not difficult to imagine a wealthy Roman from this region ordering such a fine piece of sculpture from a Greek master. It's possible that the vessel carrying the Apoxyomenos was shipwrecked in a storm, although marine archeologists searching the site have so far found nothing else that might relate to such a disaster. The other main hypothesis is that the Apoxyomenos was thrown overboard in order to help the ship ride out a storm.

Soon after its discovery a replica of the statue was displayed in the regional history museum in Veli Lošinj, whetting the public appetite for the long-awaited appearance of the real thing. With restoration complete, the Apoxyomenos was displayed in Zagreb, Osijek, Rijeka and Split in 2012, becoming something of a national celebrity in the process. The statue was exhibited in Los Angeles, London and Paris, a roving ambassador for the Eastern Adriatic which helped to plant the name of Lošinj in the international subconscious.

Meanwhile a bold new home for the statue was built on Lošinj itself. Rijeka architects Randić and Turato adapted the stately colonnaded Kvarner Palace on the Mali Lošinj



waterfront by inserting a huge metal-cage structure into the building's gutted interior. Opened in April 2016, the museum has become a major draw, and images of the Apoxyomenos can be seen on posters throughout the country. A visit to the museum itself is a compellingly intimate experience, with visitors (limited to a manageable number of entries) moving through various chambers explaining the background to the statue: there's a recreation of its former seabed resting place as well as a display of all the press-cuttings generated by its discovery, a sly reference to today's celebrity culture and the Apoxyomenos's new-found status as an expressionless, inscrutable Adriatic icon. The final room is an all-white cube containing the statue itself: in true showbiz style, the best bit is left till the end.

By exhibiting an ancient statue in a 19th-century villa whose interior has been given a 21st-century makeover, the Apoxyomenos Museum is a fitting metaphor for Lošinj as a whole – an inspirational island that provides us with glimpses of our common European past as well as offering a few pointers as to where we are going in the future.

→ Museum of the Apoxyomenos, Riva lošinskih kapetana 13, Mali Lošinj (tel. 051 734 260; www.muzejapoksiomena.hr). Open 9am-10pm Tues-Sun; adults 75kn; children and seniors 40Kn





Veli Žal



Rovenska

thanks to its proximity to the town centre and its ample amenities (there are showers and toilets, plus a lively beach bar where young locals gather in the evenings), and partly to its simple charm - it's overlooked by a scattering of colourful houses, and has a long concrete boardwalk for romantic strolls into the sea.

Timi

Veli Lošinj's city beach, Timi, was designed alongside Lošinj's first hotel. Covered in smooth concrete, it's a prime sunbathing spot,

and behind the beach lies a small cemetery which overlooks the sea - perfect for an evening wander.

Javorna

The dense forests surrounding this beach lend it a rich, green backdrop and unrivalled seclusion. Shallow waters make it ideal for swimming with children, although you might want to pack swim shoes - the clear sea comes with a bed of rocky soil.

Krivica

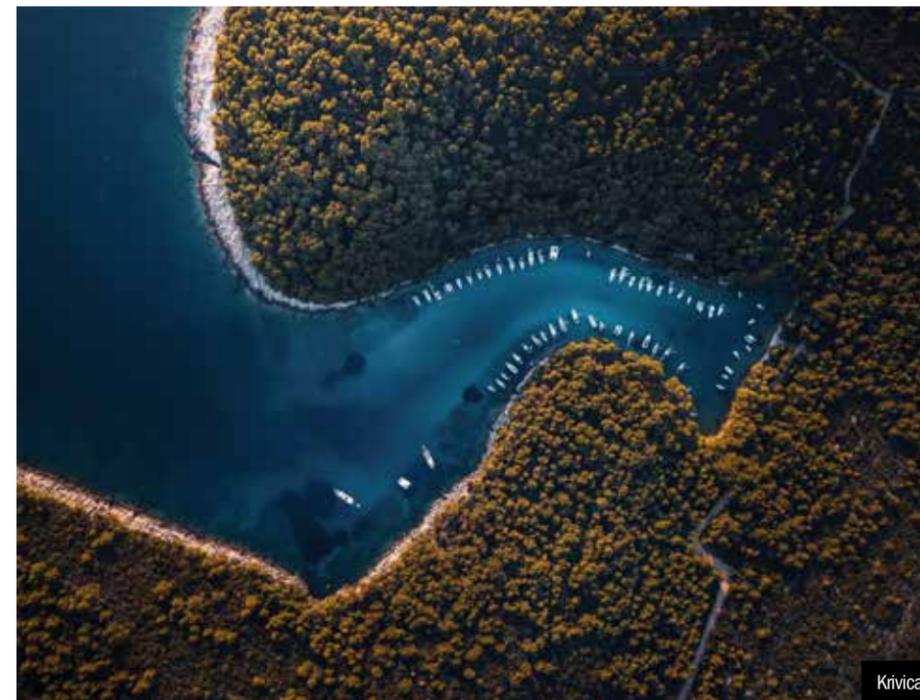
One for the more adventurous beach-goers, Krivica lies an hour and a half's hilly walk from Veli Lošinj. But it's worth the sweat: this slim beach, tucked away in a wind-proof shield of pine trees, has an air of undiscovered magic about it. And, with a flourishing array of sea flora and fauna, it's an excellent spot to go diving.

Zabodarski

One of the most stunning wild beaches on Lošinj, Zabodarski comes complete with smooth pebbles, ample shady pine trees, and shallow water - making it ideal for family trips. It's just 8km from Mali Lošinj, and easily accessible by car. Despite the ease of access, it's rarely overcrowded, so you can enjoy its views of distant islets in peace.

Veli Žal

The sheer natural beauty of Veli Žal made it the first of Lošinj's beaches to earn a 'blue flag' - part of a scheme to protect precious marine and coastal environments. The water is pristine, and the surrounding forests breathe out cool, clean air. This pebbly beach is ideally placed, backing on to a range of restaurants and wellness hotels.



Krivica

Life's a beach

Whether you want to sunbathe, surf, or paddle with the kids, here's our pick of the finest beaches on Lošinj

WHICH OF CROATIA'S ISLANDS should you visit?

There are worse decisions to be faced with, but with over a thousand unique options on offer, choosing is no easy feat. But if it's rejuvenation you're after, Lošinj has few contenders. 'The island of vitality', as it's come to be known, is blessed with great weather, sweeping landscapes and lustrous vegetation - a combination said to have uncanny healing powers. The two larger towns on the island, Mali Lošinj, and Veli Lošinj, are surrounded by some of Croatia's most unspoiled beaches, all of which offer clear turquoise water and the chance to spot dolphins leaping in the waves. That leads you to your next head-scratcher: which idyllic beach to choose?

The nicest beaches near Mali Lošinj, with either rocky or pebbly surfaces, are to the west and north of town, in the wooded bays of Čikat and Sunčana Uvala, an area with several resort

hotels that can be reached on foot from Mali Lošinj or via special hotel buses. In Veli Lošinj, Timi beach near the old cemetery and Rovenska beach in Rovenska harbour provide pebbly and concrete surfaces, plus snack bars. Follow the coastal path from Rovenska and you pass more secluded rocky beaches. If you continue along this shore for close to three kilometres however, you'll reach quiet Javorna, a small but beautiful crescent of pebbles, backed by fragrant woodland.

Čikat Bay

Northwest of Mali Lošinj, this long, undulating bay fringes a forested park. It boasts pebbled, concrete and sandy beaches. If you're looking to get active, you'll find a range of surfing and diving centres here, plus water aerobics and an aqua park. There are massage pavilions too, so you can wind down after a long day of watersports (or lying on the beach).

Rovenska

Rovenska, which shares its name with the harbour at the edge of Veli Lošinj, is popular with locals and tourists alike. That's partly

Lošinj Top 10

The healthy effects of its sea breezes, clean water and 2,600 hours of annual sunshine makes Lošinj one of the Adriatic's most desirable destinations.

1 Cool in the Cryochamber at the Bellevue Spa Clinic

Bellevue Spa Clinic offers the most up-to-date facilities for health and wellness, their renowned treatments and programmes hand tailored to suit individual needs. Now widely recognised, cryotherapy is used by some of the world's top athletes to relieve muscle pain, sprains and swelling after the soft tissue damage caused by exercise. It is also extremely effective in healing damaged skin. Bellevue Spa Clinic's Cryochamber is the only facility of its kind on the island, its rejuvenating properties and cool temperatures a stark contrast to the heat of the sun outside and the damage it causes to your skin.

→ Čikat 9, Mali Lošinj (051 679 000, losinj-hotels.com/en/hotels-and-villas/hotel-bellevue)

2 Taste Boškarin meat at the Diana Steakhouse

Ask any chef from northern Spain where the best steak meat comes from and you'll not find one to tell you it comes from a young or pampered animal. Their world renowned steaks come from aged, working cattle. And so it was in Istria, where the boškarin breed was the traditional working cow of ancient agriculture. Having almost disappeared from the fields of Croatia, although their work was easily replaced by machines, the taste of their meat was missed. Now bred purely for this purpose, these cattle now supply the best beef for the finest restaurants in Croatia and nowhere on Lošinj is this beef better experienced than on the sunny terrace, overlooking the sea at Diana Steakhouse in Čikat.

→ Setalište Dr Alfreda Edlera von Manusso Montesole 2, Mali Lošinj (051 232 055, losinj-hotels.com/en/dining/restaurant-diana)



Cryochamber at the Bellevue

3 Sample modern fusion

Japan and Croatia don't frequently get placed in the same sentence. Unless, that is, you're reading one of the many rave reviews written about the fusion restaurant Matsunoki since it opened on Lošinj in 2018. The Adriatic's superbly fresh seafood lends itself well to the pristine construction and presentation of its sushi, other delicacies like Slavonian black pig are served more traditionally or

with a Japanese bent. Elsewhere on the all-organic menu you'll find truffles from Istria, locally-reared duck and a wine list that would be difficult to beat anywhere in the country. The food is served in an ultra-modern environment comprised of low, comfortable seating, exquisitely designed with the sushi chefs, their craftsmanship and fresh ingredients on clear display before the diners.

→ Hotel Bellevue, Čikat 9, Mali Lošinj (051 679 000, losinj-hotels.com/en/dining/restoran-matsunoki)

4 Run the natural trails around Vitality Hotel Punta

If you don't fancy a dip in the sea or the on-site pool and the nearby bike and scooter rental doesn't appeal, one of the best ways to exert yourself on this strip of Lošinj coastline is a run through the surrounding trails. Dense pine woods surround the area and through these are well worn trails used as short cuts by locals and visitors. They offer not only a shaded route through the wilderness of this seaside strip, but also excellent vistas of the sea. The strong and calming scent of pine accompanies you along your run.

→ Šestavine 17, Veli Lošinj (051 662 000, losinj-hotels.com/en/hotels-and-villas/hotel-punta)



Restaurant Diana



Matsunoki

5 Explore the wine cellar of the Boutique Hotel Alhambra

Boutique Hotel Alhambra is often claimed by many of its past guests to be the best hotel on the Adriatic and it's certainly one of the most romantic. And the service is second to none. The building itself has been around since the times that the island was under the jurisdiction of the Austro-Hungarian empire and so well stocked in exclusive and elusive rarities is the hotel's wine cellar that you could easily think it is a remnant from the times European royalty would have drunk here. The finest international wines and the very finest vintages thereof are available and the on-site sommelier will offer an honest and informed guide to make your special meal a truly unforgettable experience. The hotel also offers special

wine-orientated masterclasses run by prestigious wineries.

→ Čikat 16, Mali Lošinj (051 679 700, losinj-hotels.com/en/hotels-and-villas/hotel-alhambra-and-villa-augusta)

6 Play tennis under the pines

The trails around Vitality Hotel Punta make for a great run, but if the pounding of feet doesn't appeal while you're on holiday, the pines around the hotel and that of Hotel Bellevue also offer the perfect place to practice your tennis. With Croatia hosting the ATP Open in Umag and producing several champion players in recent years, the sport of tennis is a big deal here. As a result, the country holds a plethora of great places to play. Few of them, however, can compete with the experience of playing under the shade of the pines here. Play to win or just pass the time, tennis beneath the pines

is a worthwhile pursuit whatever the level of your game is.

→ Šestavine 17, Veli Lošinj (051 662 000, losinj-hotels.com/en/hotels-and-villas/hotel-punta)

7 Dander around the Church of St Anthony

Begun in 1450 and completed as it stands today in 1774, construction of the tall, pink Church of St Anthony was funded by members of the local fishing community. It is a beautiful addition to the harbourside in Veli Lošinj, displaying a Baroque style throughout but in particular in the seven Baroque altars and works by Italian masters contained within. It has held painting collections for many years and boasts the island's grandest collection. You should especially look out for the main altar where you will find a marble antependium of the Last Supper by Albertino da Pirano and the church ceiling. The church is open

on Sunday for Mass and at that time you can also catch paintings by B. Vivarini, B. Strozzi, L. Quaren, F. Hayez and L. del Cossa and F. Polenzo.

→ Obala maršala Tita, Veli Lošinj

8 Admire the Apoxyomenos

Iconic. It's the only word to describe the Apoxyomenos statue. If it looks familiar, it's because the beautiful statue has been copied and variations made of it for many centuries. Nobody can claim that this is the original, but the dating of the statue since its 1999 discovery, off the coast of Lošinj, proves that this is the earliest surviving example in such great condition. The purpose-built museum which houses the statue is definitely worth seeing because of its informative display, cinema room, and the building's psychedelic, boundary-pushing design.

→ Riva lošinjskih kapetana 13, Mali Lošinj (051 734 260, muzejapoksiomena.hr)

9 Book the most romantic table on the island

Laterna's outdoor terrace sits on a rockface above the open sea, perfuming the breeze with aroma of a smoky wooden grill. The unbeatable sunset views, accompanied by a mandolin-strumming musician, makes Lanterna the most romantic table on the island. The fantastic food deftly matches the view, an Adriatic-inspired menu featuring local lamb, juicy cuts of steak and organic vegetables grown nearby on the island of Cres. It's all grilled right before your eyes, of course, as you gaze over the sunset panorama.

→ Čikat 24, Mali Lošinj (051 896 6147, losinj-hotels.com/en/dining/lanterna-grill)

10 Discover the wild beaches of Mali Lošinj

Some brilliant beaches on Mali Lošinj, such as Vela Draga and Veli Žal, can get pretty busy. But you always have the option of setting out in search of something more quiet, isolated and wild. Hiring a canoe or small boat is a brilliant way to cruise around the coastline in search of a private cove and there are many to be discovered. Take a packed lunch onto the boat, decamp on a beach you like and eat in the cooling shade and wonderful fragrance of the pine trees behind the beach.



Boutique Hotel Alhambra

ATTRACTIONS

The Museum of Apoxyomenos

Very much the pin-up boy of Adriatic tourism, the country's most famous Roman-era statue, the Apoxyomenos ('Apoksiomen')

in Croatian) has become something of a national icon since being salvaged from the seafloor near Lošinj island in 1999. As a depiction of a young sportsman in the act of washing after exercise, it embodies the idealised beauty that classical sculpture is famous for – and looks set to become a regular inclusion in the art-history books

of the future. The Apoxyomenos – which means something like 'an athlete scraping his sweat off' – was a common subject for ancient sculptors. There was probably a fourth-century-BC original, and Greek craftsmen continued to make variations on the Apoxyomenos theme for several centuries afterwards.

Similar statues exist in Vienna, Florence and Rome, although it's the Croatian Apoxyomenos that is thought to be the best surviving example of the genre. Discovered by a holidaying Belgian scuba-diver, the barnacle-covered bronze underwent years of restoration in Florence and Zagreb. It took three years of painstaking work to remove the encrustations, and a metal frame was built inside the statue to prevent it from crumpling. The Apoxyomenos was dated to the first century BC – due to a specific type of grain found in the stomach of a Roman-era mouse preserved within the statue's hollow interior. The statue's long-term home is the island town of Mali Lošinj, kept in a purpose-built museum designed by Rijeka-based architects Randić & Turato.

→ Museum of the Apoxyomenos, Riva lošinjskih kapetana 13, Mali Lošinj (051 734 260, muzejapoksiomena.hr)

Marine Education Centre

Run by the Blue World/Plavi Svijet Institute, the Marine Education Centre promotes conservation issues throughout the Croatian Adriatic, with particular reference to the bottlenose dolphin colony off the Lošinj coast. An attractive display introduces the world of the dolphin and the importance of protecting it. Visitors are shown a short film (with English subtitles), dioramas and computer graphics. An 'acoustic room' demonstrates how dolphins communicate, and also how easily they can be disturbed by the rumble of boat engines. The MEC does not recommend dolphin trips (the whole point of the operation is to protect the dolphins as wild creatures, not disturb them or tame them), but it does have an important role in educating local boat captains how to respect dolphins when out on the water. Visitors who want to get involved in dolphin conservation can become a godfather or godmother to a dolphin for one year (from 200kn). The MEC is also becoming more and more involved in the conservation of sea turtles, who inhabit the sandy shallows of the Kvarner Gulf, opening the sea-turtle rescue centre on the Čikat peninsula. Here, sick turtles are kept in tanks until they're healthy enough to be set free. (Previously, poorly turtles had to be sent all the way to Pula on the Istrian mainland).

→ Kaštel 24 (051 604 666, www.blue-world.org)

RESTAURANTS

Alfred Keller

Upscale à la carte dining destination. See On Our Radar. → Boutique Hotel Alhambra, Čikat 16, Mali Lošinj (051 260 716, losinj-hotels.com/en/dining/restaurant-alfred-kelle)

Bora Bar

This charming spot is run by chef Marco Sasso. Born in Pisa, Sasso was a truffle dealer in the United States before coming to Croatia. He gets the fungus fresh from Istria and uses it in starters, such as tuna carpaccio with marinated celery roots. Other ingredients come fresh from the sea on which the terrace is perched. Desserts include own-made panna cotta or chocolate mousse.

→ Rovenska 3, Veli Lošinj (051 867 544, borabar.net)

Borik Mediterranean Bar

Overlooking Sunny Bay a short walk from the Family Hotel Vespera, the Borik serves the pebbly beach of the same name, a comfortable and convivial spot whose culinary remit goes way beyond the provision of beer, soft drinks for the kids and standard hand-held snacks. Fishy and meaty main dishes are given a

light, Mediterranean touch, the wine list is decent and desserts stretch to figs in prošek sherry with cream skuta dry cottage curd cheese from Istria. As the sunset turns golden over the Adriatic right in front of you, the cocktail shaker comes out and mixed drinks take over the focus. Open until midnight.

→ Sunčana uvala 9, Mali Lošinj (051 667 350, losinj-hotels.com/en/dining/borik-mediterranean-bar)

Gostionica Marina

White tablecloths, attentive service and wonderful food make this place feel more upmarket than other fish-oriented restaurants in Veli Lošinj's main harbour, but the prices here are competitive. Fresh bruschetta, made of chopped tomatoes and garlic with thick, flame-broiled toast, is slapped on the table as soon as you sit down. The servers are familiar with the bottles on the long list of Croatian wines. You can see fish delivered here by boat in the morning, and come lunchtime have that fresh catch, or steak or lamb, cooked over a wooden flame on the terrace, which is at the bend in the harbour and has great views of both the town and the sea.

→ Obala maršala Tita 38, Veli Lošinj (051 236 178, gostionica-marina.hr)

Konoba Bukaleta

The hulking oven here turns out the kind of pizzas that would pass muster in Italy: a perfectly molten mix of cheese and sauce atop a thin, crispy crust. Despite the casual rustic feel, attention is paid to detail. Each table gets a Peugeot pepper grinder, the pizza comes with a sharp, heavy stainless steel knife, the servers are fast, and care has been taken with the food.

→ Trg žrtava fašizma 7, Mali Lošinj (051 231 777, facebook.com/bukaleta777)

Konoba Cigale

The bounty of the sea and Lošinj culinary traditions are used to best advantage here at Čikat cove, the house Cigale brodet soup, the monkfish carpaccio and the lobster buzara with homemade pasta all outstanding. The fish is fresh, the shellfish likewise. Leave room for dessert, perhaps an almond semifreddo with caramel. Great Croatian wines, too. Open from April to October.

→ Šetalište Dr Alfreda Edlera von Manusso Montesole 4, Mali Lošinj (051 238 583, losinj-hotels.com/en/dining/konoba-cigale)

Konoba Ribarska Koliba

One of the fancier spots on Veli Lošinj's little harbour, the Koliba has offerings like a tasty shark steak with a delicately garlicky sauce, a brodetto tomato-based

fish stew, and baked fish. Calamari can be fried, grilled or stuffed with seafood, and lobster comes grilled or with spaghetti. Along with the usual steaks, meats also include lamb on a spit.

→ Obala maršala Tita, Veli Lošinj (051 236 235, timeout.com/croatia/restaurants/konoba-ribarska-koliba)

Lanterna Grill

With a memorable location alongside a lighthouse overlooking Susak island from this isolated cape, the Lanterna Grill matches the view with culinary expertise. Fish platters, T-bone steaks and lamb chops are prepared on an open grill and accompanied by locally sourced organic vegetables. The walk here alone is an experience, along the seafront past pine trees and a lonely votive church. Open from May to October.

→ Čikat 24, Mali Lošinj (051 896 6147, losinj-hotels.com/en/dining/lanterna-grill)

Lošinjско Jidro

Just a few hundred metres uphill from the tip of the harbour awaits cuisine that you'd happily walk much further for. The sheltered terrace has no spectacular vistas: the most interesting sight is the wood-fired grill, and the fresh fish sizzling on it. There's a big kitchen inside too, ready with a range of seafood, including scallops, sea snails



Konoba Cigale

and other lovely shell-dwellers. The place is famous for its bro-det, a stew with a thick tomato sauce and a wealth of fish and seafood. Charming servers make you feel at home. It's easy to see why this place is a favourite among locals.

→ Sv Marije 11, Mali Lošinj (051 233 424, visitlosinj.hr/de/losinjsko-jidro-buffet)

Restaurant & Caffè Bar Veli Žal

Already many years in the business, the Veli Žal has the perfect elevated location, overlooking the beach, a lovely little bay and the verdant hillside opposite. Terrace dining here is enhanced by classic Kvarner fare, expertly conceived and presented: Cres lamb, the fish and seafood of the Kvarner Bay and ravioli filled with skuta cheese and asparagus. Your meat is grilled over wood charcoal or on a spit, and your dishes can be slow-braised under a cooking bell or peka, if ordered the day before. The Veli Žal is year-round, offering themed global cuisine in winter, Mexican, French and so on.

→ Sunčana uvala 3, Mali Lošinj (051 667 260, losinj-hotels.com/en/dining/restaurant-and-caffe-bar-veli-zal).

Restaurant Čikat

Serving holidaymakers staying at the camp of the same name, Čikat entices diners with lamb and suckling pig on a spit, enjoying on an expansive terrace surrounded



Restaurant Diana

by pine forest. Families are well-catered for a full range of dishes for children, including pizzas, which can also be delivered. Open from May to October.

→ Čikat 6A, Mali Lošinj (051 231 809, losinj-hotels.com/en/dining/restaurant-cikat).

Restaurant Diana

A steakhouse with a panoramic view over the Adriatic, the Restaurant Diana is also extremely versatile, offering all kinds of carnivorous treats sizzled on its Big Green Egg barbecue. The beef and veal will have already been dry-aged before expert hands place them over the hot charcoal. The pasta – fuži, ravioli

– is homemade, the sausage comes from indigenous Istrian boškarin beef and the greens, not least the wild asparagus, is locally sourced. Fine desserts and four dozen Croatian wines complete the picture.

→ Šetalište Dr. Alfreda Edlera von Manusso Montesole 2, Mali Lošinj (051 232 055, losinj-hotels.com/en/dining/restaurant-diana)

Restaurant Levante & Beach Bar Agava

Another dining and drinking option at the Vitality Hotel Punta in tranquil Veli Lošinj, the Levante and the Agava complement each other perfectly, each adopting a healthy approach to providing what's in

front of you. Light bites include organic cheese in olive oil, peppers stuffed with skuta cheese and black truffles. In the evening, mains are more substantial, with fresh fish and succulent meat as their centrepiece. Fruit and vegetable drinks, and quality Croatian wines also feature. Open from May to October.

→ Šestavine 17, Veli Lošinj (051 662 085, losinj-hotels.com/en/dining/restaurant-levante-and-beach-bar-agav)

Restaurant Punta

Exquisite seafood and meat dishes served in a second-to-none location. See On Our Radar.

→ Šestavine 13A, Veli Lošinj (051 662 034, losinj-hotels.com/en/dining/restaurant-punta)

Restaurant Matsunoki

Upscale Asian-fusion restaurant with a fabulous list of wine and whiskies. See On Our Radar.

→ Hotel Bellevue, Čikat 9, Mali Lošinj (051 679 000, losinj-hotels.com/en/dining/restoran-matsunoki)

Silver Bay

Freshly opened in 2019, Silver Bay offers sophisticated versions of Mediterranean classics, set on a sea-facing promenade. You'll find plenty of Adriatic fish and meat dishes alongside fresh salads and cold cuts. There's an impressive cocktail list to sample at any time, but if you're going for the full meal experience, you might prefer to pair your menu choices with some of the excellent Croatian wine, sparkling wine and champagnes from the restaurant's well-stocked cellar.

→ Šetalište Dr. Alfreda Edlera von Manusso Montesole 5, Mali Lošinj (051 238 273, losinj-hotels.com/en/dining/restaurant-silver-bay)

ON OUR RADAR

Alfred Keller ★★★★★

Named after the star Austrian architect who designed it, the Alfred Keller is a riot of marble and onyx, overlooking scenic Čikat Bay. Given the fact that the inspectors at Gault & Millau bestowed not one but two chef's toques on this upscale à la carte dining destination, the cuisine more than matches the sumptuous furnishings. Chef Thomas Brasleret delves deep into Lošinj culinary lore – and sources as close to home as possible, particularly where aromatic herbs and seasonal organic products are concerned – to conjure something memorable. Of course, the material he has to work with is already first-class, Cres lamb, fresh clams and shellfish, Istrian boškarin beef, even donkey meat – but it takes that little bit extra to complement each dish with a local or international wine from over 400 labels lining the cellar. Open from April to November.

→ Boutique Hotel Alhambra, Čikat 16, Mali Lošinj (051 260 716, losinj-hotels.com/en/dining/restaurant-alfred-keller)



Restaurant Matsunoki ★★★★★

Top-quality sushi and an open kitchen are the hallmarks of this swish Asian restaurant in the Hotel Bellevue. It's, in fact, a fusion cuisine, in that in chef Saša Pribičević uses locally sourced Mediterranean ingredients from nearby organic producers to create his sublime maki, nigiri and chirashi, not to mention kimchi and dashi fish soup. Invention isn't restricted to your main course – the matcha ice cream comes with a sweet paste of healthy adzuki beans. Authenticity stretches to the drinks list, where you'll find Japanese whiskies from the likes of Nikka Taketsuru, sake brandies and wines, both sparkling and still. The acclaimed Frantić-Šekoranja studio was responsible for the exquisite decor. Open from July to December.

→ Hotel Bellevue, Čikat 9, Mali Lošinj (051 679 000, losinj-hotels.com/en/dining/restoran-matsunoki)

Restaurant Punta ★★★★★★

The signature restaurant of the Vitality Hotel Punta in smaller, quieter Veli Lošinj reflects the tranquillity of the picture-postcard harbour around it. On its expansive terrace, overlooking the divine blue of the Adriatic, you can take your time over the succulent peka dishes slow-cooked under a so-called cooking bell – just give them a call to have the kitchen staff prepare your feast a few hours ahead of time. The seafood is fresh, the lamb and veal chops juicy, and the boškarin beef exquisite. Choose from some 50 Croatian wines to accompany. Open from April to October.

→ Šestavine 13A, Veli Lošinj (051 662 034, losinj-hotels.com/en/dining/restaurant-punta)



Restaurant Matsunoki

CAMPSESITES

Camp Baldarin

Though its facilities may lack the modern finish of some others, Camp Baldarin boasts unrivalled seclusion and the chance to get truly immersed in nature. The main draw of this naturist campsite, which is nearby the sweet village of Punta Križa, is its peace and quiet. The thick forest surrounding the site is thriving with wildlife, and you're likely to see deer, rabbits or wild ducks wandering past your tent. 'Textile' (clothed) campers are welcome too, and there are three private beaches (two naturist, one not) plus a range of sports facilities.

→ Bokinić 66 (051 235 680, camp-baldarin.com)

Camp Bijar

Located by the historic town of Osor, this small, modest campsite has the kind of 'round-the-campfire' intimacy that you won't find at the larger sites. It's also an ideal base for sports holidays; the rocky beach that runs along the edge of the camp is a great take-off spot for canoeing and windsurfing, while there are a number of biking routes running nearby. Hikers should try the challenging Televrin Peak, which offers some of the most impressive views on the island.

→ Osor bb (051 237 147, camp-bijar.com)

Campsite Čikat

The largest campsite on Lošinj, Čikat has all the bases covered for a lively family holiday. Its centrepiece is an aquapark which has enough water slides to keep anyone under 15 occupied for hours, plus 'health' and 'leisure' pools for the grown-ups (including a hydromassage pool). There's a Zen Garden, too, where frazzled parents can unwind with yoga and meditation while the camp's minders entertain the kids.



Ideally placed on Čikat Bay, between a private beach and a thick pine forest, it's also only 2km from the centre of Mali Lošinj town, where there are restaurants and bars aplenty. It has ample facilities and camping options to suit all tastes - ranging from a standard pitch to swanky rentable mobile homes.

→ Campsite Čikat, Čikat 6A (051 232 125, camp-cikat.com)

Camping Slatina

Voted Croatian Camping Union's 'Best Campsite' for several years in a row, this excellent campsite leaves little to be desired. Reasonably priced, it boasts high-quality facilities (including a pizza restaurant and scuba-diving school), plus three private beaches. Its camping plots and mobile homes are arranged on sloping ground,

meaning you'll have an enviable view of the sea whatever you go for. Plus, it offers an award-winning 'camping with dogs' programme, which includes a dog-friendly beach zone and a free dog trainer, making it the obvious choice for any campers wanting to bring their pup along for the summer fun.

→ Martinšćica 92 (051 574 127, camp-slatina.com)



HOTELS

Boutique Hotel Alhambra

Easily one of the Adriatic's best boutique hotels. See On Our Radar. → Čikat 16, Mali Lošinj (051 679 700, losinj-hotels.com/en/hotels-and-villas/hotel-alhambra-and-villa-augusta)



ON OUR RADAR



Family Hotel Vespera



Family Hotel Vespera

Family Hotel Vespera

Animators, entertainers and educators make it a fun stay for the young ones at the Family Hotel Vespera – and a relaxing time for grown-ups, too. Set in Sunčana uvala, Sunny Bay, with a pebble beach and sunbathing areas nearby, the Vespera puts on shows and mini discos in the evening, while older kids can do battle on the gaming consoles, take tennis lessons or plunge into the Aqua Fun complex. Parents and babies can also use the 24/7 facilities of Mom's Corner. If needed, there's a pediatric clinic nearby.

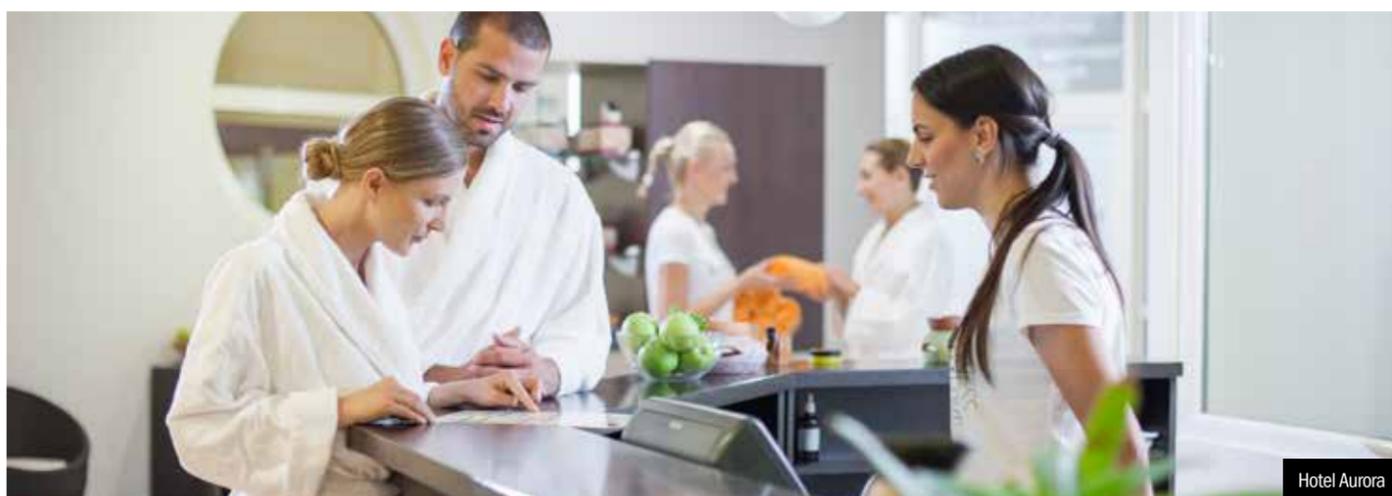
→ Sunčana uvala 5, Mali Lošinj (051

667 300, losinj-hotels.com/en/hotels-and-villas/hotel-vespera)

Hotel Aurora

Set in thick pine forest close to thesea, the 350-room Hotel Aurora caters to leisure-seekers and business visitors in equal measure. While children can play in safety at the Family Aqua Fun pool complex, a large conference hall can accommodate 350 delegates. Everyone can take advantage of the Aura Botanical Spa Garden, with its Finnish, Roman and Biosaunas, the heated indoor and outdoor seawater pools, and whirlpool baths. As added extras, children from six and up can take part in an aromatherapy workshop and learn how about the effects of natural cosmetics on the skin. Alternatively, there's a one-day boat trip to the island of Ilovik.

→ Sunčana uvala 4, Mali Lošinj (051 667 200, losinj-hotels.com/en/hotels-and-villas/hotel-aurora)



Hotel Aurora

Hotel Bellevue ★★★★★

Founded on the Habsburg concept of health tourism, the 19th-century equivalent of the 21st-century wellness break, the Bellevue has its own spa clinic, the largest in the region, with seven treatment rooms, two suites for couples with a sauna, steam room and twin waterbed, a heated indoor seawater pool and jacuzzi, and an outdoor seawater pool surrounded by sunbeds and a spa garden. Attached to its own private beach, the Bellevue pushes the boat out as far as suites are concerned, with hot tubs set out on the balcony. From the superior guest rooms and up, all bathrooms have underfloor heating and views of century-old pines or the Adriatic. Of the five restaurants and bars, the Matsunoki specialises in top-quality Japanese cuisine with a Mediterranean twist, the Lounge Bar Alto Rosso offers signature cocktails and a little live jazz piano, while the Azzur Pool is all about grilled boškarin burgers and selected wines.

→ Čikat 9, Mali Lošinj (051 679 000, losinj-hotels.com/en/hotels-and-villas/hotel-bellevue)

**Boutique Hotel Alhambra ★★★★★**

Housing the prestigious Alfred Keller Restaurant, the Boutique Hotel Alhambra couples with the Villa Augusta to offer a luxurious, sophisticated stay in a unique architectural setting. Art Nouveau meets 21st-century design solutions here, close to the pine woods and the Adriatic. The expansive Cube Spa Alhambra features a Rasul Chamber in the spa suite, a heated indoor seawater pool, a Finnish sauna and three treatment rooms. As for the guest rooms, from deluxe to the Augusta Grand Suite, elegance abounds, underfloor heating and marble in the bathrooms, and views of Čikat Bay from the balcony. High-end cuisine from the kitchens of the Alfred Keller can also be enjoyed at the Beach Bar Pasara, which also offers its own fresh fish and meat grilled on a Big Green Egg barbecue. Extras here include a private plane tour of Venice or the Plitvice Lakes, or a private sunset cruise of Susak island. Alhambra is a member of the Small Luxury Hotels of the World, an exclusive club of independent boutiques.

→ Čikat 16, Mali Lošinj (051 679 700, losinj-hotels.com/en/hotels-and-villas/hotel-alhambra-and-villa-augusta)

Vitality Hotel Punta ★★★★★★

Health, wellness and relaxation are the main focus at this sea-facing lodging and fitness complex. Croatia's first gluten-free, asthma- and allergy-friendly, pro-running hotel, the Punta has its own Vitality Centre and Spa, infinity seawater pool and tennis courts. Communal fitness sessions take place outdoors, led by professional trainers well versed in the Les Mills programme, all included in the price. Individuals can take advantage of the two fitness halls as well. Hiking and rock climbing on a artificial slope can also be arranged, as well as basic diving and sailing lessons. At the in-house restaurant, nutritionists consult guests on their dietary requirements and advise chefs accordingly.

→ Šestavine 17, Veli Lošinj (051 662 000, losinj-hotels.com/en/hotels-and-villas/hotel-punta)



Lošinj

Hotel Bellevue

Sleek flagship hotel. See On Our Radar.

→ Čikat 9, Mali Lošinj (051 679 000, losinj-hotels.com/en/hotels-and-villas/hotel-bellevue)

Villa Diana

For an active break in serene surroundings, look no further than the Villa Diana. Set between the sea and pine forest that provide the views from the comfortable suites and superior rooms, the Villa Diana offers catamaran and sailing courses, SUP and windsurfing, tennis and mini-golf. Two beaches, one lined with pebbles, the other soft and sandy, sit nearby. Dining options include the on-site meat-focused Restaurant Diana, the Beach Bar Diana or the Konoba Cigale within close range.

→ Čikat 8, Mali Lošinj (051 232 055, losinj-hotels.com/en/hotels-and-villas/villa-diana)



Hotel Bellevue



Vitality Hotel Punta



Hotel Bellevue

Villa Kredo

Close to the fine pebble beach of Silver Bay, shaded by pine forest, the comfortable Villa Kredo consists of nine modern double rooms and an apartment suitable for two to four people. Also near Aquapark Čikat, the property is ideal for a family holiday, with a restaurant on-site and beachfront bar. Bikes and boats can also be rented, as can the tennis courts a short walk away.

→ Šetalište Dr Alfreda Edlera von Manusso Montesole 2, Mali Lošinj (051 661 111, losinj-hotels.com/en/hotels-and-villas/villa-kredo)

Villa Mirasol

Dating back to 1902, the Villa Mirasol offers both old-school elegance and contemporary comforts. With Art Nouveau touches to the decor, the villa is adjoined by two bay-facing terraces and features an expansive, aromatic garden with its own jacuzzi. A private beach beckons just beyond. Within the villa, a spa area features a Finnish sauna, a Turkish bath and gym equipment, and guests can also use the high-end wellness centre at the nearby Boutique Hotel Alhambra. You'll also find a private cinema and library – in fact, you can even arrange for a private chef and butler. Five bedrooms are set over three floors, marble lining the common areas, staircases and bathrooms. While the ground floor has the cinema, the first floor has a carom billiard table and the bathroom leading off the master bedroom on the top tier is equipped with a jacuzzi.

→ Čikat 16, Mali Lošinj (051 661 111, losinj-hotels.com/en/hotels-and-villas/villa-mirasol)

Vitality Hotel Punta

Fitness-focussed hotel in the lesser-populated Veli Lošinj. See On Our Radar.

→ Šestavine 17, Veli Lošinj (051 662 000, losinj-hotels.com/en/hotels-and-villas/hotel-punta)

Villa Hortensia

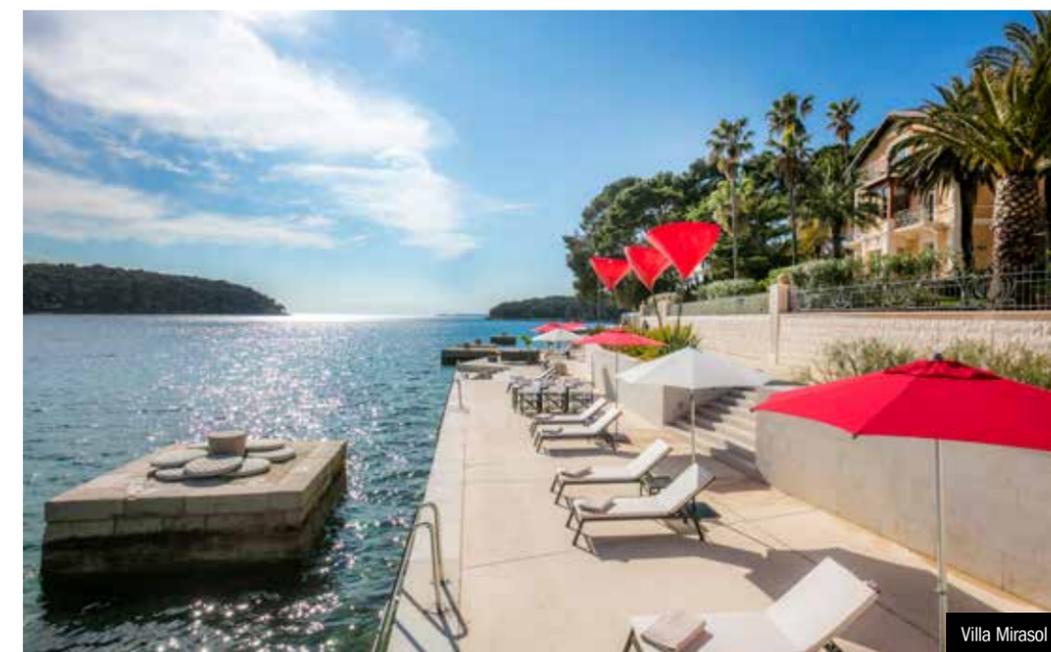
If you're looking for the once-in-a-lifetime Hollywood movie star treatment, you can find exactly that at Villa Hortensia. A truly superlative offering from Lošinj Hotels and Villas group, this beautiful villa is equipped with luxury amenities including your

own private butler and in-house chef. Private excursions and VIP transportation with a luxury car and speedboat are easily organised. Surrounded by a beautiful fragrant garden, the villa has not only its own heated outdoor pool but also comes with its own private beach, guaranteeing superb seclusion. Extra facilities such as Finnish saunas and the Spa Clinic are also available to guests, located at the nearby Bellevue and Alhambra hotels.

→ Čikat 9A Mali Lošinj (051 661 111, losinj-hotels.com/en/hotels-and-villas/villa-hortensia)

GETTING THERE AND AROUND

Lošinj airport is served by seasonal flights from Zagreb, Venice and Lugano, Switzerland. In summer, a daily catamaran runs from Rijeka to Mali Lošinj (2hr 50mins). Several buses a day link Cres town and Mali Lošinj; two link with Zagreb. From mid June to September, a car ferry runs twice weekly to Mali Lošinj from Zadar and Pula.



Villa Mirasol

www.restaurant-hotel.com.hr

B2B magazine for
hospitality and tourism
18 years on the market



**TOURISM
HOSPITALITY
ENOGASTRONOMY...**
...interviews, trends,
events, news

Business Media Croatia d.o.o.
Savska cesta 182, 10000 Zagreb
restaurant-hotel@bmcroatia.hr, www.bmcroatia.hr



Dubrovnik



Dubrovnik Top 20

Croatia's crown jewel brims with gastronomic temples, historic attractions – and tourists.

1 Enjoy starched-linen elegance at Proto

The seafood-oriented Proto claims a tradition dating back to 1886, and it was here that Edward VIII entertained Wallis Simpson in the 1930s. As well as squid and lobster in simple, superbly balanced sauces, there's fresh shellfish from Mali Ston up the coast. You can spend an enjoyable hour over the fish platter for two, and the extensive wine list covers just about every quality wine that Croatia has to offer – an award-winning sommelier is quick to offer up smart suggestions, pairing both domestic and international wines with meat and fish specialities. Recently refurbished and relaunched, Proto has been

tastefully modernised, but keeps in with the antiquated elegance of the building. Beautiful old maps and antique oak panelling nod sympathetically to its past. The look is sealed with words of scribes: choice verses from local Dalmatian poets adorn the ceiling. Proto is Michelin recommended. Booking essential. → Široka 1 (020 323 234, esculaprestaurants.com/fish-restaurant-proto-dubrovnik)

2 Nab the best table at Nautika

Calling itself 'Dubrovnik's finest restaurant', Nautika is certainly the most prestigious, the kind of place that is the automatic choice whenever the Pope might be in town. It's not only the setting, overlooking Lovrijenac



met with sorry ends. Attractions also include a salt-water lake, any number of beaches, some nudist, and the remains of a Napoleonic fort.

→ lokrum.hr

5 Tuck into Asian fusion at Azur

This superbly located eatery sits by the entrance of Buža I, in the heart of Dubrovnik's historic centre but within easy reach of the sea. Here you can tuck into a reasonably priced, Med- or Asian-influenced cuisine before an afternoon's sunbathing, or enjoy a nightcap overlooking the waves. Alternatively, Azur has also opened its own in-house bar with signature cocktails.

→ [Pobijana 10 \(020 324 806. azurvision.com\)](http://Pobijana 10 (020 324 806. azurvision.com))

6 Walk the City Walls

The easiest and most popular itinerary for visitors to Dubrovnik is the stroll around its fortifications. It also should be the first, as it allows the newcomer to get their bearings and gain an appreciation of the scale of this intricate jewel, and the skill of those who designed and constructed it. You also get breathing space from the high-season masses below. This is an elevated promenade and history lesson in one. The main entrance and ticket office is by the Pile Gate – having scaled the steps, you can set your own pace, taking an hour or an entire afternoon. Dubrovnik Walks is an agency offering walking tours of the City Walls run by knowledgeable locals.



Fish Restaurant Proto

fortress and the Adriatic (reserve a panoramic table if you can), or the starched white-tablecloth formality – it's the cuisine of long-term head chef Mario Bunda, who insists on fresh, locally sourced ingredients. The five- and seven-course menus were made for holiday blow-outs. Prominent local venues Gradska Kavana and Dubravka 1836 are under the same umbrella.

→ [Brsalje 3 \(020 442 526, nautikarestaurants.com/restaurant-nautika\)](http://Brsalje 3 (020 442 526, nautikarestaurants.com/restaurant-nautika))

3 Discover recent history

New Zealander Wade Goddard came to the Dubrovnik as a photographer during the Siege in the early 1990s – and stayed. Affected by what he saw and keen to broaden the public's understanding of what happens in wartime, he opened War Photo Limited. He expanded its remit to exhibit works by

leading exponents of this brave art from flashpoints around the world. The first floor houses these hard-hitting images in regularly changing exhibitions – this year including Goddard's from Kosovo – while above, you can see what was happening here in the 1990s.

→ [Antuninska 6 \(020 322 166, warphotoltd.com\)](http://Antuninska 6 (020 322 166, warphotoltd.com))

4 Have your own island idyll

Accessed by regular taxi boat from Dubrovnik's Old Port in the city centre, idyllic Lokrum is the classic day trip from town – but does not provide overnight stays. In fact, cannot, and not just because of local regulations. When Napoleon's troops expelled Benedictine monks from the island, they placed a curse on whomsoever would sleep there again. Unfortunate Habsburgs, responsible for the beautiful botanical gardens here, duly



City Walls

7 Sink a beer at Buža and Bard

The bar tables of your dreams are set on one of two panoramic terraces atop a rocky sea-view promontory propping up the City Walls: Bard and Buža. At Bard, you can even dive into a moonlit Adriatic. To find it, from the cathedral, walk down Ilije Sarake as far as the Azur restaurant. Diagonally opposite is the doorway. For the classier Buža, from Sveta Margarita Church, follow signs saying 'Cold Drinks With The Most Beautiful View'.

→ Bard Ispod Mira 12/Buža ulica od Margarite

8 Catch a top DJ at Club Culture Revelin

Dubrovnik's leading nightclub fills the 16th-century fortress it's named after, overlooking the Old Port. A club venue since 2011, inviting Fatboy Slim and Martin Solveig in 2012, Revelin now hosts mainly Croatian DJs. Dubrovnik's medieval architects had the foresight to construct what is an ideal club venue of bare stone blocks and arched aisle spaces. What Renaissance Ragusans would have made of the go-go dancers is another matter. With an elongated bar and large dancefloor, it's can cater to large groups.

→ Ulica Svetog Dominika 3 (020 436 010, clubrevelin.com)

9 Splurge at 360

At this top-drawer setting overlooking the Old Port, you get top-drawer cuisine. Here, under the expert gastronomic stewardship of head chef Marijo Curić, you can expect modern Mediterranean dishes and contemporary refashions of Croatian classics.



360

All is meticulously sourced, painstakingly created and immaculately presented, including the desserts. The menu changes constantly but 360° is particularly skilled with seafood – this is upscale, sophisticated dining at its best. The wine cellar alone comprises 6,000 bottles. Beg for a booth in the gun chambers. Open evenings only, closed Mondays.
→ Sv Dominika (020 322 222, 360dubrovnik.com)

10 Live in luxury at the Sheraton

Opening up the lesser-known Dubrovnik Riviera, the stretch of resorts mainly frequented by locals halfway between the Old Town and the airport, the five-star Sheraton runs from surprisingly affordable classic double rooms to a presidential suite. Attractions include the Shine Spa, pools indoor and out, a gym, the Leut restaurant, a piano bar and a cocktail lounge.

→ Šetalište dr F Tuđmana 17, Srebreno, Mlini (020 601 500, sheratondubrovnikriviera.com)

11 Shop at Maria Store

Strategically located at the Ploče Gate, the Maria Store one of the few places in Croatia where you can find a battery of major international names such as Givenchy, Lavin, Moncler and Stella McCartney, all laid out in a light, relaxing space designed by Italian architect Marco Bonelli. Prices to match the quality and atmosphere on offer. Staff are approachable, though, whatever you're looking for.

→ Ulica Sv Dominika (020 321 330, mariastore.hr)



Copacabana

12 Dander around Rector's Palace

The most important historic monument in Dubrovnik, the Rector's Palace was where the city fathers of the Ragusa Republic convened. On the ground floor are the medieval prison and courtrooms. Upstairs, where each Rector resided for a month's stint, sedan chairs, carriages, magistrates' robes and wigs, and portraits of local notables, illustrate the lofty affairs of state. One curiosity is the clocks, some set at 5.45pm, the time when Napoleon's troops entered in 1806.

→ Pred Dvorom 3 (020 321 497)

13 Sip Croatia's finest wines

Opened in 2008, Dubrovnik's first real wine bar is run by a friendly and knowledgeable team. D'Vino manages to stock more than 100 varieties, most of them available by the glass. Every decent Istrian, Slavonian and Dalmatian label is here, including Grgić Plavac Mali and Zlatan Plavac. The house wine begins at 25kn and savoury meat-and-cheese platters are tailor-made to complement. It's a comfortable, modern, intimate space to enjoy a drink – with a few seats outside in summer. The venue also lays on wine tours.

→ D'Vino, Palmotićeveva 4A (020 321 130, dvino.net)

14 Admire Croatian modern art

Just a short walk away from the Old Town, the wonderful former Banac Mansion contains four floors and nine rooms of exhibition space, with a permanent collection that includes many works by Cavtat-born Vlaho Bukovac, alongside challenging contemporary shows. There is

usually at least one major summer exhibition featuring a leading Croatian or international artist, and frequent contemporary art happenings.

→ Frana Supila 23 (020 426 590, ugdubrovnik.hr)

15 Sample the craft beer scene

Craft beer may be last week's news in much of Europe but it's still pretty revolutionary in Dubrovnik. In three short years local boutique brewers DBC have transformed the local drinking scene, persuading the best of the Old-Town bars to make more of an effort when it comes to beer, and more recently becoming a destination bar in their own right. Revitalizing a forgotten corner of the harbourside suburb of Gruž, DBC occupies a utilitarian industrial space with glistening vats in the background and a makeshift bar out front. Four extremely palatable brews are available on tap - Goa IPA, Maestral lager, Fortunal Pale Ale and Grego stout – alongside seasonal specials and guest beers. The outdoor terrace consists of a few up-ended barrels in a parking lot. One of the best things about this place is the social mix it attracts: it's in part of the city that's not swamped by tourists, and gets a lot of locals who want an alternative to drinking in the Old Town.

→ Obala Ivana Pavla II 15 (095 356 96 20, dubrovackapivovara.hr)

16 Get messy at Ludwig

The haunt of the pierced and the tattooed far from the plethora of mainstream venues around the Old Town, this grunge bar in a Stradun side street is a rare venue that appealing to the under-25s. You won't see any sandal-wearing, middle-aged

tourists lingering over a pint at Ludwig - some might look in, then immediately head elsewhere. Its soundtrack hardly wavers from guitar-based rock, Ludwig has decorated its walls with a seemingly random mosaic of posters, book covers and pictures torn from magazines (Gogol, Mogwai, Kill Bill and Hendrix all get a decorative look-in). For all this, it's the hard-living black-clad drinkers hunched around the counter that make the place.

→ Zamanjina 5 (098 179 1284)

17 Catch outdoor jazz at the Troubadour

On any given night for six months of the year, crowds flock to this intimate enclosed square in the heart of the Old Town to hear live music and soak up the atmosphere. OK, these days the most famous bar in Dubrovnik might look like a billboard for T-Mobile and beer prices are just silly, if you didn't know this was the lovely old Troubadour, you wouldn't touch it with a bargepole. But lovely old Troubadour it is, and visit it you must. Formerly run by Marko, a member of the renowned 1960s group the Dubrovački Trubadori, this is a touchstone for artists, musicians and entertainers of his beat generation. On quieter afternoons or in winter, try and get a seat in the tiny interior and see how Dubrovnik looked in the pre-boom days.

→ Bunićeva poljana 2 (020 323 476)

18 Go sea kayaking

Dubrovnik's signature outdoor activity for visitors, sea kayaking is organised for complete beginners as a half-day jaunt with lunch on Lokrum island thrown in. You only need turn up, go through a few paddling techniques in shallow, protected waters, and the Adriatic is yours. Sea kayaks are more comfortable than conventional kayaks. Their length, with extra cargo capacity, allows the kayak to move smoother and easier in a straight line. Experienced kayakers have circumnavigated Ireland and Australia in one. For lesser mortals, the calm waters from the Pile Gate to the verdant, car-free island of Lokrum is, under guidance, a doddle. Some companies also offer sunset paddles, with wine and cheese thrown in. Children aged eight to 16 are welcome but must be accompanied by an adult.

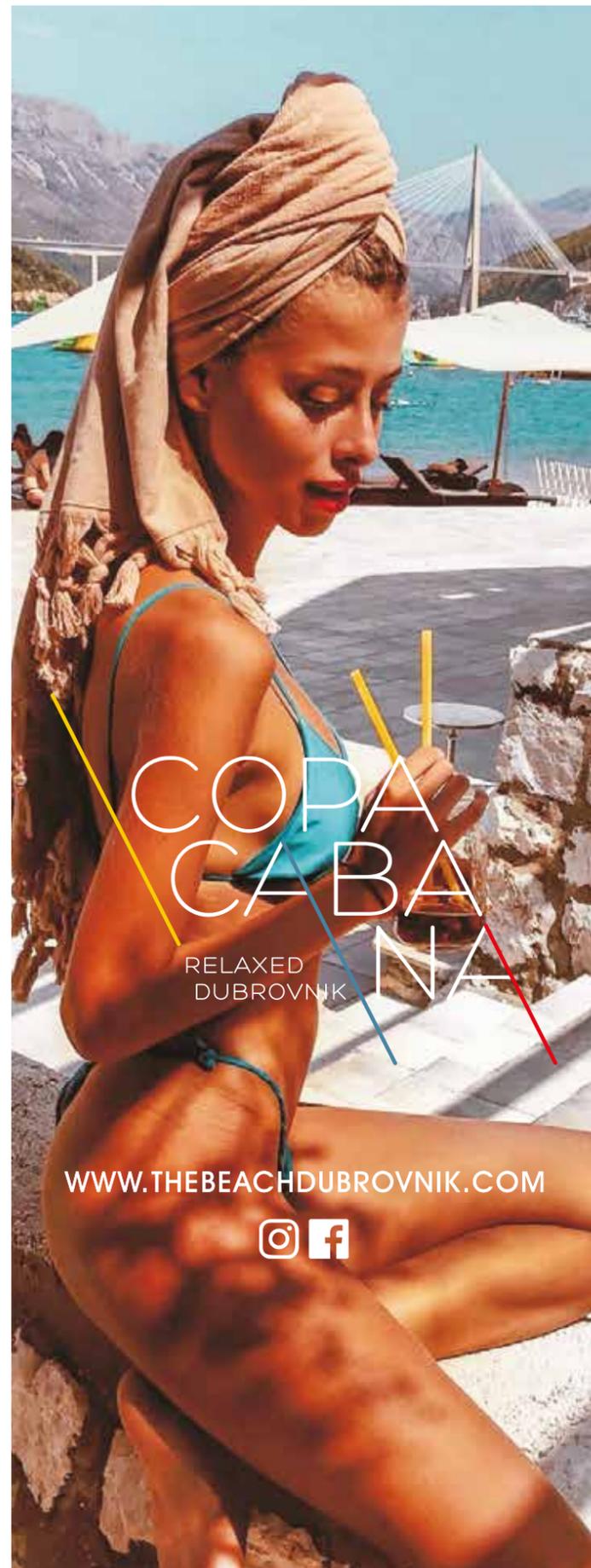
19 Order a sundowner at Copacabana Beach

A half-moon of pebbles and gravel set in Seka Bay, Copacabana is one of Dubrovnik's best beaches. Studded with luxury white loungers and deckchairs, there are heaps going on to keep you amused with watersports, paddle boarding and inflatables for the kids. The beachside restaurant provides further inducement to spend the day here with breakfast, lunch and dinner covered. Craving a detox? There are deliciously fresh juices and smoothies available. Hedonists can even enjoy table service of cocktails to your sunlounger. The beach is fabulous for families - there's a giant stretch of coastline for the kiddies to explore, while you can get acquainted with the best of Croatian wine from the beach bar, or enjoy a post-swim massage. The sunset boat trip comes recommended, where you paddle out to see while Dubrovnik is basked in the golden light of sundown.

→ Ivana pl. Zajca bb (098 335 615, thebeachdubrovnik.com)

20 Experience Dubrovnik Summer Festival

Croatia's biggest cultural bash is the Dubrovnik Summer Festival, 47 days and nights of classical music, theatre, opera and dance performances (mainly) around the Old Town. Something akin to Edinburgh without the fringe, it has been staging high-brow culture in Dubrovnik for more than 60 years. Shows bring Dubrovnik's historic jewels to life. Shakespeare is performed open-air at the Lovrijenac fortress, orchestras play at the Sponza Palace, piano soloists at the Cathedral, ballet takes place after dark outside St Blaise's Church and all kinds of events have the moonlit City Walls as a backdrop. In all, some 70 venues are used - even Lokrum island. Book ahead for the biggest events - for others you can pay on the door. For the most prestigious events, smart dress, although not obligatory, is expected. Also remember that there will be a number of free performances around the streets of the Old Town throughout festival time - you needn't have to pay through the nose, or pay at all, to get swept up in the whole event.





Dubrovnik Cathedral

ATTRACTIONS

City Walls

See Dubrovnik Top 20.

Dominican Monastery

Between the Sponza Palace and the Ploče Gate, this monastery is best known for its late Gothic cloisters and late 15th-century paintings of the Dubrovnik School in the museum – in

particular masterpieces by Nikola Božidarević, including his Our Lady with the Saints. On the walls of the monastery church are a beautiful wooden crucifix by Paolo Veneziano from 1358 and a painting by renowned fin-de-siècle artist Vlaho Bukovac from Cavtat, The Miracle of St Dominic. → Sv. Dominika 4 (020 321 423)

Dubrovnik Cathedral

The original church, allegedly funded by Richard the Lionheart

in recognition of the local hospitality when shipwrecked on Lokrum in the 1190s, was lost to the 1667 earthquake. In its place was built a somewhat bland, Baroque affair, free but unenticing to walk around. The main draw is the treasury at one end, a somewhat grotesque collection of holy relics. The arm, skull and lower leg of patron St Blaise are kept in jewel-encrusted casings, another box contains one of Christ's nappies, and wood from

the Holy Cross is incorporated into a finely crafted crucifix from the 16th century. Perhaps the most bizarre artefact is the creepy dish and jug designed as a gift for the Hungarian King Mátyás Corvinus, who died before he could receive it. → Kneza Damjana Jude 1 (020 323 459)

Dubrovnik Walks

A licensed guide takes you on a general tour of the Old Town, a more specialised Walls & Walks tour and, for something completely niche, a themed Game of Thrones tour. Alternatively, you can have combinations of any two. There are also sea kayaking tours and walks given in Spanish. Dubrovnik Walks recently introduced a replica throne from the HBO series for keen instagrammers. → (095 806 4526, dubrovnikwalks.com)

Franciscan Monastery/ Old Pharmacy Museum

One of the oldest pharmacies in Europe is, quite remarkably, still a working chemist's for locals, and in the complex of the Franciscan Monastery where beautiful cloisters lead to the Old Pharmacy Museum by a pretty courtyard. There you'll find disturbingly large grinders and implements used by the medical profession in the Ragusan era. → Stradun 2 (020 321 410)



Franciscan Monastery/Old Pharmacy Museum

Homeland War Museum

The Homeland War is the Croatian term for the conflict of the 1990s that broke up Yugoslavia and gained Croatia its independence. The setting here is apt: a Napoleonic Fort, bravely defended by locals in 1991. Go straight up the two flights of stairs to the top terrace of the fortress in which the museum is housed and take in the view. The fort was built by the French in 1806-1812 then extended by the Austrians. Inside you see examples of the ammunition used to shell Dubrovnik, maps of the damage it caused, all manner of memorabilia and a video recording of Dubrovnik as it was being shelled.

→ Imperial Fort, Srd 2 (020 324 856, mdrd.hr)

Museum of Modern Art

See Dubrovnik Top 20.

Rector's Palace

See Dubrovnik Top 20.

Red History Museum

Croatia was part of the communist-ruled Yugoslav federation from 1945 until 1991, and yet there's still a shortage of museums that deal with this period in an accessible way. The Red History Museum, opened in April 2019, offers at least part of an answer. A private project initiated by a group of local friends, it offers decent-sized dollops of



War Photo Limited

historical chronology alongside an impressive haul of everyday artefacts. Although the display kicks off with a hammer-and-sickle-spattered history of communism as an ideology, the accent is on the more colourful aspects of communist rule, and its attempts to design a lifestyle that combined equality and order with consumerism and cultural freedom. Recent

worldwide interest in Yugoslav-era architecture and design finds an instant echo in the ticket office, which is housed in a K67 - the red fibreglass kiosk designed by Slovene Saša Mächtig and put into use all over the former Yugoslavia as newspaper stall, fast-food booth or market stand. Elsewhere the display is rich in revealing detail: a wardrobe full of denim clothes, pop

records, racy glamour magazines. Much of the exhibition is interactive in the sense that you can sit on original couches, leaf through books, or activate sound and visuals using your smartphone. There's a "dark room" that covers the regime's attitude to dissent, including docu-clips of Goli otok, the island where pro-Soviet communists were imprisoned and tortured after President Tito's break with Stalin in 1948. The most moving part of the museum comes at the end, when pictures and short texts recall family memories of those who have contributed. One of them is from Željko from Zagorje about attending a summer work camp on the "Youth Island" of Obonjan, nowadays a swanky glamping resort for a totally different kind of tourist.

→ Sv. Križa 3 (091 528 7744, redhistorymuseum.com)

Sponza Palace

The attractive, 16th-century former customs house and Ragusa mint is used to house the extensive state archives. Several rooms off the arcaded ground-floor courtyard are used to display photocopies of the archives' most treasured historical documents. → Sv. Dominika 1 (020 321 032)

War Photo Limited

See Dubrovnik Top 20.



Rector's Palace



KLARISA
RESTAURANT

*Fine dining
in the
romantic
convent
of St.
Claire.*



www.klarisa.hr
Poljana Paska Miličevića 4
OLD CITY
DUBROVNIK - CROATIA



Azur

RESTAURANTS

360

See Dubrovnik Top 20.

Amfora

Amfora is an excellent choice for meat and fish lovers, its cuisine drawing its inspiration from all areas of the Mediterranean, with styles and influences from Morocco to Lebanon, and all the way up the Croatian coast. Fresh ingredients are provided by nearby Gruž produce market – the blue-fin tuna is line-caught. The wine list is long, with eight choices by the glass. Besides the modern interior, there is an outdoor area with views of an orchard. Reservations recommended in high season.

→ Obala Stjepana Radića 26 (020 419 419, amforadubrovnik.com)

Amoret

Location, location, location they always say – and this one has a setting second-to-none, right by Dubrovnik Cathedral, its tables spread out at the foot of the steps. That makes it an ideal spot for breakfast, lunch or dinner, that relaxing first coffee as you plan out your day or welcome bowl of salad after a morning's sightseeing or plate of fresh fish and vegetables following an afternoon at the beach. The menu holds few surprises – but you're not here for experimental, fusion cuisine. The shade is most welcome in August and service is swift.

→ Od Pustijerne 2 (091 628 1907, amoret-dubrovnik.com)

Ankora

Sitting on a terrace of the Ankora, eight kilometers west of Dubrovnik, you may get the impression that you are sitting on the deck of a boat. Not only is the sea within easy reach, all 80 seats by the water – an eastern wind brings fragrances of the Mediterranean herbs used to make homemade grappa, gladly served to you as you sit down. Since you are so close to the waves, it comes as no surprise that the menu is full of fresh fish, shellfish, scampi and lobster, prepared in the traditional Dalmatian way. A variation on this theme is seafood pasta and risotto. Reservations are recommended on balmy summer evenings.

→ Zaton Veliki (020 891 031, restaurant-ankora-dubrovnik.com)

Azur

See Dubrovnik Top 20.

Banje Beach

As well as being a key nightlife destination overlooking the nearest beach to the Old Town, Banje Beach provides top-notch Mediterranean cuisine by day – all year round, in fact. There are few surprises on the menu, though this isn't any bad thing, while the view is an equally reliable combination of sand, sea and clear sky.

→ Banje Beach, Frana Supila 10B (099 314 64 85, banjebeach.com)

Barba

Barba ('uncle', 'old man' or 'captain') is a street-food fish restaurant based on a healthy concept. Here healthy, Mediterranean food is quickly prepared and thrown together in imaginative combinations: octopus sandwiches with mascarpone, marinated anchovies with cuttlefish salad and nectarines, shrimps with rocket and parmesan... You'll also find pasta with tuna and artichokes, and mussels and fava beans. Barba is always fast, warm-hearted and brimming with great ideas.

→ Boškovićeva 5 (091 205 3488, facebook.com/dubrovnik.barba)

Bistro 49

It's nice to find a neat new bistro place out towards the bus station, an area hitherto starved of decent places to eat. It certainly looks rather grand, decked out in a deftly-curated mix of wooden floorboards, minimalist chairs and tables, and padded purple booths. There's a broad selection of international and local fare from breakfasts upwards, with no-risk popular catering choices such as čevapi, pastas and grilled squid filling out the menu. The signature-dish Burger 49 (49Kn) with smoked cheese and bacon is an adequate way to solve your hunger pangs but not really the gourmet treat that will have you recommending the place to all and sundry. Weekday lunchtime



In the very heart of the Old City, savour the traditional fish and meat dishes once enjoyed by the distinguished citizenry of Dubrovnik's olden days. Dining can be enjoyed on the secluded terrace, on Široka Street or in the elegant interior.

**Authentically
Croatian**



PROTO

fish restaurant

EST. 1886

OLD CITY – Široka no.1

t: + 385 (0)20 32 32 34

sales: +385 (0)20 32 49 50

www.esculap-teo.hr · open: 11–24

Dubrovnik restaurants

specials (shrimp burger with chickpeas, black risotto with octopus) are the way to go if you want to find out what the kitchen is really capable of. The generous selection of craft ales ensures that Bistro 49 is not a bad place for a drink, and in this location it's probably your only choice for a decent pint.

→ Obala Ivana Pavla II (020 891 038, facebook.com/bistro49dubrovnik)

Bistro Izvor

Located 10km out of Dubrovnik at the source of the Ombla river, the shed-like structure that houses Bistro Izvor is unsigned, unheralded, and already something of a local cult. You can find it by heading down an unmarked lane on the west side of the Ombla bridge. Despite the back-of-beyond location the interior oozes urban chic, with matt greys and sepia photos overlooking a huddle of tables. However the real highlight is the gazebo-like terrace (reached by steps a few metres away), right beside the weir where the waters of the Ombla take a tumble. Fare ranges from pulled pork bruschettas (45Kn) and gourmet burgers (92Kn) to rolled sea bass with prosciutto and shrimps (140Kn) and stuffed "umbuo" (part-cured pork loin; 160Kn). With Pan pivo on draught and craft beers in bottles, it's a good, if not to say unique, place to relax with a drink.

→ Rožat Gornji 1A (095 396 0777, facebook.com/Bistro.Izvor)

Bistro Tavulin

Inventive bistro recommended by Michelin. See On Our Radar.

→ Cvijete Zuzorić 1 (020 323 977, tavulin.com)

Bugenvila

Here on the historic waterfront of Cavtat, modern, seasonal cuisine meets high London criteria. The kitchen at Bugenvila is headed by Lukasz Widomski, a former souschef at London's Le Caprice. He takes special care to use exclusively fresh vegetables grown on organic farms around Cavtat. Carnivores can rest assured that the meat served is free-range and the fish locally caught. Only 46 seats and a sea view make the atmosphere romantic and relaxed, with service suitable for a fine-dining restaurant. The menu is somewhat short, changing daily according to what's fresh from local suppliers. There's a

children's menu too. Grown-ups can choose from the selection of craft beers and cocktails, while the coffee is processed on daily basis. Reservations recommended.

→ Obala Ante Starčevića 9, Cavtat (020 479 949, bugenvila.eu)

Chihuahua Cantina Mexican Dubrovnik

Having moved from its Old Town location to the upper end of the pedestrianised zone near Lapad beach, Chihuahua remains a lively place for decent Mexican food, nasty margaritas and cool music. On offer are all the usual favourites, nachos, burritos, fajitas, enchiladas and quesadillas, an exotic combination incongruous from the somewhat staid international dining scene around Dubrovnik.

→ Šetalište kralja Zvonimira 2B (099 685 2380, facebook.com/chihuahuaemexicantindubrovnik)

Copacabana Beach

One of Dubrovnik's best beaches with excellent amenities and crystal clear waters, Copacabana's beachside restaurant provides further inducement to visit. Studded with luxury white loungers and sheltered tables, the simple yet creative cuisine melds local produce with modern gastro flourishes, like the sea bass tartare with peach and fresh mint or tempura prawns with wasabi mayonnaise. A strong list of domestic and international wines - and a stellar range of cocktails - makes it easy to spend the day and night here. Craving a detox? There are deliciously fresh juices and smoothies available.

→ Ivana pl. Zajca bb (098 335 615, thebeachdubrovnik.com)

Dubravka 1836

By the Pile Gate this landmark venue dating back to its namesake year of foundation is now a modernised, sunken room brightened by old photos of the trams that terminated here when intellectuals, writers and the chess society were regulars. A spot on the seafacing terrace is ideal for the Dubrovnik Breakfast with ham and cheese, one of five morning options. Salads, pizzas and seafood dishes - including the Dubravka seafood salad, John Dory and Dubrovnik-style king prawns - comprise the main offerings as this café transforms into a restaurant at meal times.

→ Brsalje 1 (020 426 319, nautikarestaurants.com)



Bistro 49

Dubrovnik

One of the fine-dining addresses that more than deserves its Michelin-listed status, Dubrovnik spoils you with attention right from the start, with a guest greeter at the bottom of the stairs, a maître d waiting for you at the top, and a qualified sommelier as well as your regular waiter. Fortunately this is more than just fancy-restaurant theatre; the food here

is genuinely show-stopping. The menu is classic-European with Adriatic leanings: signature mains stick to solid choices such as sea bass, steak and duck; while an armoury of creative invention is brought to bear on presentation and accompanying flavours. The extraordinary pork steak with pate de fois gras encased in cocoa is a typical example of their approach; an extraordinary combination that



Bistro Tavulin

RESTAURANT ORSAN



Dine – and experience the vivid life of a small marina

KONOBA ANKORA



Taste the flavours of the sea – and great meat – while enjoying our terrace and sea breeze

COUNTRY HOME MUSLADIN – LJUBAČ



Traditional gastronomy – discover meals from the past

Eat where the Dubrovnik locals eat



RESTAURANT ORSAN

Tel: +385 20 436 822

www.restaurant-orsan-dubrovnik.com



KONOBA ANKORA

Tel: +385 20 891 031

www.restaurant-ankora-dubrovnik.com

*Country home
Musladin*

COUNTRY HOME MUSLADIN

Tel: +385 99 303 1559

www.countryhome-musladin.com

ON OUR RADAR

Bistro Tavulin ★★★★★

The challenge of dishing out creative cuisine in a tourist-trudged corner of the Old Town has been well met by the team at Tavulin, gearing a menu towards light bites as well as serious culinary inclinations. The lunch menu is lighter than its evening counterpart, with fancy burgers as well as near-perfect risottos (served not with grated cheese but with crispy parmesan on a stick) and the ever-popular grilled chicken served with potato crisps. It's with the evening spread that Tavulin's keep-it-local-but-be-inventive philosophy comes to the fore, with signature dishes like orzotto with shrimps (90Kn) and the standout octopus ragout (155Kn). Among the desserts, Zemlja svetog Vlaha (The Soil of St Blaise; 55Kn) is a multi-layered treat with fruit at the bottom, crumbled muffin on top and chocolate mousse inbetween. With a very big outdoor terrace and very little seating inside, Tavulin gets the balance between good food and summery informality just about right.

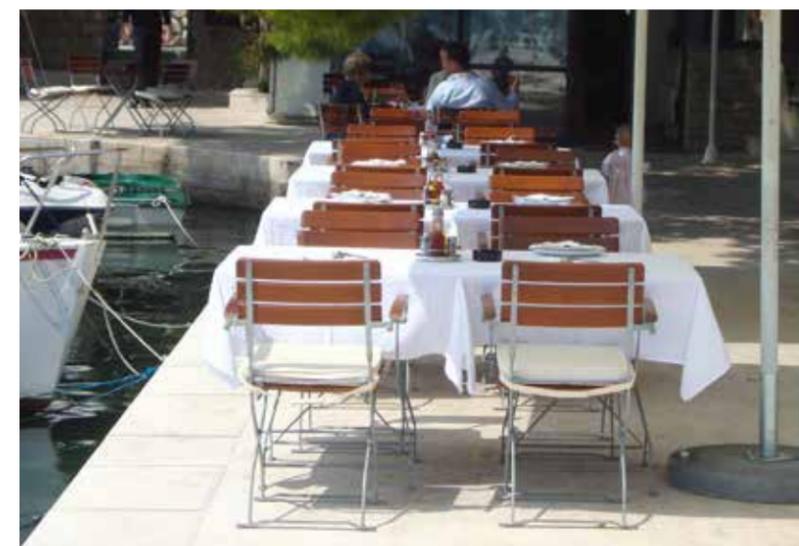
→ Cvijete Zuzorić 1 (020 323 977, tavulin.com)



Orsan ★★★★★

Here in Gruž Bay, a long row of tables sit on a sea-lapped terrace in the shade of a huge pine tree, making for a summer retreat that is enjoyed by cats and regular diners alike. As well as its eye-catching location, and a menu of shellfish, grilled meats and pastas, plus signature fresh fish, the Restaurant Orsan provides wallet-friendly marendas, the early lunchtime snack of Dalmatian lore. Wine prices are reasonable. Reasonably priced Dalmatian dishes with an eye-catching location.

→ Marina Orsan, Ivana Zajca 2 (020 436 822, restaurant-orsan-dubrovnik.com)



Porat Restaurant & Bar ★★★★★

Located on the busy Gruž Harbour, Porat majors in caught-that-day fish and juicy cuts of steak – fishing boats dock up to the restaurant around 11pm with a fresh bounty that is grilled and prepared on your table within the hour. Excellent local produce is cooked well and served in creatively garnished arrangements by friendly staff. This is casual dining: the proximity of the tables creates a shared, lively atmosphere and the wooden-panelling and industrial features sets an attractively modern interior. Porat is by no means a walletbuster but well worth the extra few kunas.

→ Obala Stjepana Radića 30 (020 333 552, porat-dubrovnik.com)



Nautika Restaurant

fully justifies the 230Kn layout. They also go to town on creative desserts, with a perfectly judged, not-to-sweet fig pastry among the treats on offer. It's a restaurant that's expensive but fair: our meal was preceded by an extraordinary amuse-bouche followed by bread and olive oil, none of which were charged as a cover. It's a relaxing, indulgent experience all round; seating is on a covered roof terrace, music is unobtrusive mix of jazz, chanson and stylish light pop.

→ Marojice Kaboge 5 (020 324 810, restorandubrovnik.com)

Fish Restaurant Proto

See Dubrovnik Top 20.

→ Široka 1 (020 323 234, esculaprestaurants.com/fish-restaurant-proto-dubrovnik)

Glorijet

There can't be a better location for a traditional seafood restaurant than right next to Dubrovnik's fish market in the harbourside suburb of Gruž. It's also an atmospheric place to eat, with amber-coloured tablecloths laid put beneath the barrel-vaulted brick ceiling of a former boathouse, looking out

on the quays where excursion boats are moored. It's the perfect place to work your way through the traditional Adriatic repertoire of grilled fish, shells and seafood risottos – standards are slightly higher (and prices slightly lower) than in the Old Town.

→ Obala Stjepana Radića 16 (020 419 788)

Gverović-Orsan

In the fishing village of Zaton Mali 7km north-west of town, this old boathouse was converted into a restaurant by Niko Gverović in 1966. Beautifully located and family-operated – Niko Jr runs it with his mother, Mira, producing the speciality black risotto Orsan, four kinds of shells and shrimps sautéed in wine and lemon and mixed with rice soaked in black squid ink. It has its own beach (and shower), so you can swim while dinner is cooking.

→ Štikovica 43, Zaton Mali (020 891 267, gverovic-orsan.hr)

Kamenice

Timeless, traditional and tremendously cheap, this locals' favourite has hardly changed

despite the new tourist traps around it. A prime site by the market has not affected prices, decor or staff dress. Waitresses in mules deliver piles of mussels, squid and titular oysters in white-tile surroundings.

→ Gundulićeva poljana 8 (020 323 682)

Klarisa

Located in the very heart of Dubrovnik's Old City, in the former Convent of St. Claire, just in front of Great Onofrio's Fountain, this classy restaurant offers a full range of fresh Adriatic fish, clams and crabs, along with locally produced vegetables from just outside Dubrovnik in Konavle. Succulent and substantial main dishes can be enjoyed casually on the courtyard terrace while those after something quicker can pop into the snack bar in the same complex.

→ Poljana Paska Miličevića 4 (020 413 100, klarisa-dubrovnik.com)

Konoba Blidinje

A real find, this, opened in 2006. Facing Gruž harbour across the water, Blidinje comprises a rustic ground-floor space of two dozen covers, and two first-floor

terraces with wonderful views of the marina and hills beyond. Carnivores should order veal, lamb or pork slow-cooked in the open oven – having given the kitchen a two-hour notice. The mixed grill for two, as good as any in town, would feed three. It's a pizzeria too, with plenty of choice. Considering the quality and location, prices are more than reasonable.

→ Lapadska obala 21 (020 358 794, konoba-blidinje.com)

Konoba Dalmatino

For traditional food, served with finesse, and with a reasonable price tag, Dalmatino takes some beating. It's located in an old house that has been renovated to show the original stonework at its exposed best. The menu is as straightforwardly Dalmatian as the name of the restaurant, featuring plenty of local fish and fowl, although a lot of creativity has gone into the details – grilled fish might be served with a colour-coordinated array of Mediterranean vegetables instead of the usual blitva. A lot of effort

Dubrovnik Restaurants

goes into the desserts – for some, it’s the Dalmatino cheesecake that deserves the superlatives; others swear by the chocolate mousse. The place is run by a South African of Korčulan descent, so it’s no surprise that the wine list veers enthusiastically towards the fine whites from that island.

→ Prijeko 15 (020 323 070, dalmatino-dubrovnik.com)

Konoba Kasar

Set in the old boathouse of a 15th-century summer mansion, Kasar is a good choice for those who want to escape the crowds of Dubrovnik and enjoy home-made food by the sea. In fact, this restaurant is easier to find from the sea than after the ten-kilometre drive from Dubrovnik. Parking is also hard to find in Zaton, but the trip is worth it. By day, Kasar allows you a break from your swim – if you’re arriving by yacht, there are two moorings at your disposal. Rustic, homemade cuisine is based on what the sea has to offer – and your fresh tuna steak or tasty lobster will be complemented with home-made bread with olive oil.

→ Za Crkvom 29, Zaton Veliki (020 891 226, restaurant-kasar.hr)

Kopun

Kopun is local dialect for capon, the fleshy rooster that was once a mainstay of European dinners and feasts. And, not surprisingly, it’s Croatian-raised capon that provides much of the inspiration behind the menu at this restaurant, with speciality dishes such as roast capon in mushroom sauce, and capon with oranges and honey – the latter dish lovingly described in the comedy by 16th-century Dubrovnik playwright Marin Držić, ‘Dundo Maroje’. Pièce de résistance, however, is the capon stuffed with a rich filling of herbs, meat and vegetables, a dish sufficient for a party of three or four – although you really ought to order it a day in advance to make sure they’ve got the necessities. Kopun’s menu also features some exquisite fish and seafood, alongside traditional Dubrovnik favourites such as šporiki makaruli (locally made pasta with goulash sauce), all washed down with the help of an intelligently compiled list of Istrian and Dalmatian wines. The interior is a breath of fresh air too, eschewing Dalmatian folksiness in favour of bright-white minimalism with artworks on the walls.

Outdoor seating shelters under a triple-branched pittosporum tree, with the façade of the Jesuit Church in the background.

→ Poljana Rudjera Boškovića 7 (020 323 969, restaurantkopun.com)

Lady PI-PI

It’s a strenuous climb up the steps from Stradun to reach the under-the-walls alley that harbours Lady PI-PI, and then you usually have to queue up for quarter of an hour to get in (you can’t reserve). However neither of these factors appear to have dented the popularity of this cult outdoor restaurant, its split-level terrace spread beneath a shady pergola. The recipe for success is simple: grill it, and grill it with affection. Fish, steaks and sausages all come off the coals in fragrant, succulent form. The grotesque street-facing sculpture poised above a stone bowl provides a clue to the name.

→ Antuninska 23, Peline (020 321 154, facebook.com/LADY.PI.PI.Dubrovnik)

Lucin Kantun

Clean and crisp best describe the simple furnishings and mainly white interior of Lucin Kantun tucked away in Od Sigurate. The food, however, is far from simple: not quite a tapas bar, it offers a full, sit-down meal comprised of lots of

small delicious dishes – marinades of salmon, lobster, octopus and the like, or a variety of hot concoctions, plus, a large choice of cheeses, hams, dips and other tempting nibbles. All is reasonably priced: finish with the home-made cake.

→ Od Sigurate 4A (020 321 003, facebook.com/LucinKantunDubrovnik)

Nautika Restaurant

See Dubrovnik Top 20.

Nishta

Opened by a Swiss-Croatian couple, Dubrovnik’s first vegetarian restaurant offers miso and gazpacho soups, a superbly varied salad bar, and several exercises in veggie east-west fusion: try the temperitos, burrito-like treats with tempeh; or the health-restoring orsotto (barley cooked risotto-style with seaweed). Laško beer and wines by the glass keep the mood bubbly. Success has led to an opening in Zagreb too.

→ Prijeko 30 (020 322 088, nishtarestaurant.com)

Orsan

Fantastically well-prepared Dalmatian dishes in an eye-catching location. See On Our Radar.

→ Marina Orsan, Ivana Zajca 2 (020 436 822, restaurant-orsan-dubrovnik.com)

Otto

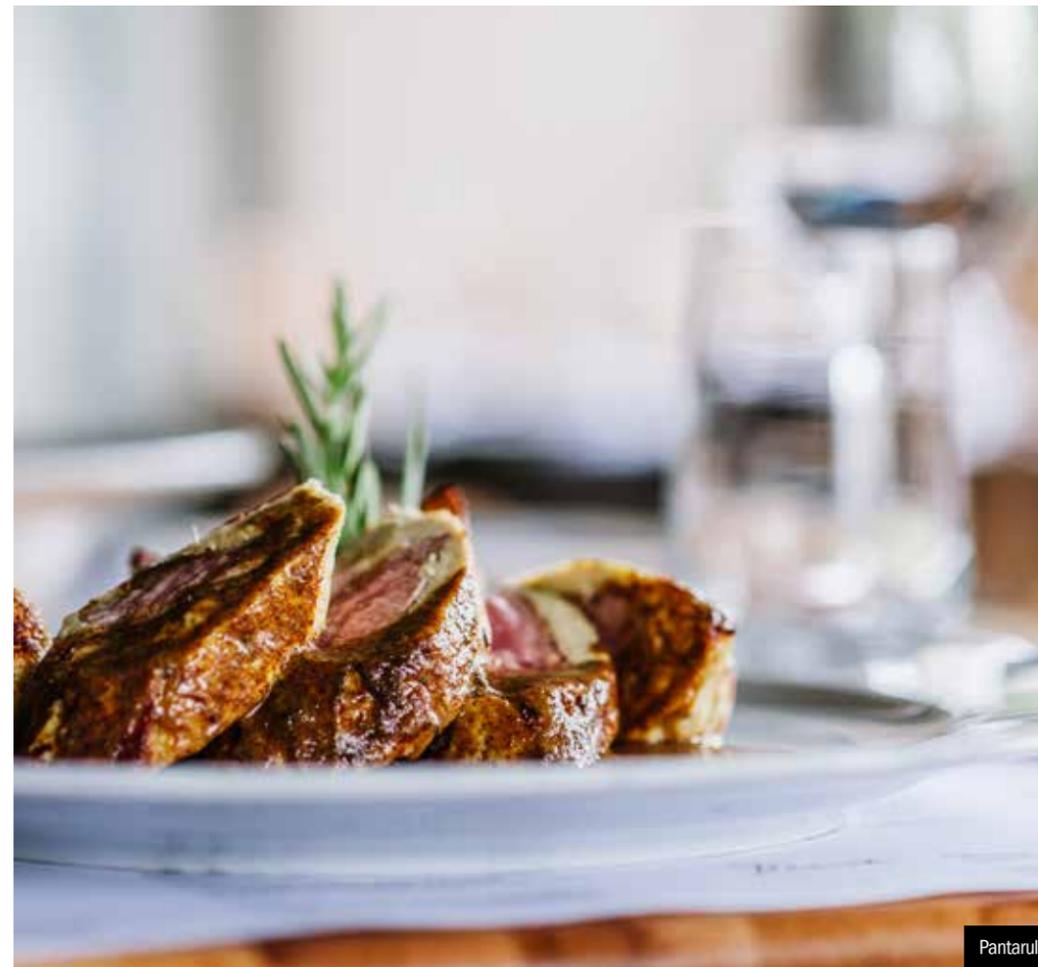
Otto represents a new breed of bistro in Dubrovnik. Set just outside the Old Town, overlooking the yachts on Gruz Bay, this is Dubrovnik at its most contemporary. Classic fish and seafood dishes are given the gastro-treatment, beautifully garnished with fancy purees and sides. Prices are beyond reasonable and even less than what you’d pay for a standard fish dinner in one of the central tourist traps.

→ Nikole Tesle 8 (020 358 633, tavernaotto.com)

Oyster & Sushi Bar Bota

Freshly farmed shellfish from the famed oyster beds of Mali Ston are the star attraction at this open-air bar with high stools and high tables, beautifully situated on a raised terrace behind the cathedral. The oysters are served fresh, fried in tempura, or as key ingredient in a sushi roll. There is also a full menu of all other forms of sushi, with fishy Adriatic ingredients well to the fore and some creative Adriatic-Japanese combinations. Fish carpaccios, tuna tatare and tempura-fried shrimps round out the kind of genuinely fascinating menu that demands repeated sampling.

→ Od Pustjerne bb (020 324 034, bota-sare.hr)



Pantarul

Panorama

Hikers arriving at Mount Srd can take advantage of this café-restaurant with the jaw-dropping view below, the Old Town, Lokrum island and, off to the right, a stunning sunset. Overseen by the Nautika team responsible for two of the city’s most prominent (and panoramic) establishments near Pile Gate in the Old Town, Panorama does light lunches until 6pm, mains such as lamb shank and veal on forest risotto, and fillet of sea bass.

→ Upper cablecar station (020 312 664, nautikarestaurants.com/panorama-restaurant-bar)

Pantarul

Pantarul (‘fork’ in local dialect) is a Dubrovnik success story. Here, unpretentious slow-food cuisine is based on seasonal ingredients. The vegetables arrive from the fields around Dubrovnik, the fish is what the local fishermen have caught that day and the meat is prime quality. In a simple, modern and yet cosy interior, you can opt for the

creative five-course tasting menu of fish or meat, or choose from the concise à la carte selection. Fettuccine with veal tail and sage, gnocchi with octopus in arrabiata sauce or tender beef cheeks would be stand-out dishes. All in all, highly recommended.

→ Ulica Kralja Tomislava 1 (020 333 486, pantarul.com)

Peppers Eatery

The coastal stroll along the northern side of the Lapad peninsula is getting more and more popular, not least because of the construction of the new Marina Frapa and the expected influx of fancy yachts. There’s a brace of new restaurants along here too, including Peppers, which shelters in a pleasant garden patio right opposite the marina entrance. It’s angled at people with broad tastes and variable appetites: the list of starters is bigger than the list of mains, some of which might serve as a light lunch in their own right, others of which are well suited to being strewn around the table and

shared like tapas. The accent is in Far Eastern-meets-Mediterranean, with Goma Wakama seafood salad and Teriyaki Chicken wings sharing space with salmon fillets and gourmet burgers. The Chinese duck salad stacked on wanton crisps is a particular favourite. The long list of martinis is a tempting inducement to stick around.

→ Lapadska obala 20 (020 487 578, peppereatery.com)

Pivnica Dubrava

Behind the name of the pub hides a restaurant for lovers of simple meat meals, prepared in a traditional Dalmatian way: grilled or under the iron bell covered with ashes and burning coal, locally referred to as sach or peka). This is why Dubrava is a frequent choice for locals all year round. Grill is grill, but what could really put a smile on your face is peka-cooked veal, lamb or octopus. Its homemade bread is prepared the same way. The selection of beer is mainly based domestic with a limited number of imports. For something stronger, there are plenty of

Dubrovnik Restaurants

homemade grappas and liquors. Reservations for groups are recommended in high season and a must at weekends, when live Dalmatian music is a fixture.

→ Mali Stradun (020 448 354, pivnica-dubrava-dubrovnik.com)

Poklisar

With its terraces flanking a prominent square by the old harbour, the Poklisar fills in high season. Prices, given the setting, are reasonable and among the standards is the odd gem: shrimps in saffron sauce or home-made gnocchi with gorgonzola and rocket. Desserts deserve a detour as you arrive from Lokrum: walnut pancakes or wild-fruit parfaits. Dine before the cheery live music drowns out the lap of the sea.

→ Od Ribarnice 1 (020 322 176, poklisar.com)

Porat Restaurant & Bar

Straight-off-the-boat fish served to your table within an hour of docking. See On Our Radar.

→ Obala Stjepana Radića 30 (020 333 552, porat-dubrovnik.com)

Sesame

Now a fine-dining restaurant where there once was a casual eatery, Tovjerna Sesame retains a characterful atmosphere, in the front room and back dining area, which spreads to the upstairs veranda in summer. Oyster soup, Šipan salad and the house risotto of clams and squid feature among the starters and light lunches, while main fish courses feature some winningly inventive combinations. It’s also a decent spot for breakfast.

→ Dante Alighieria 2 (020 412 910, sesame.hr)

Shizuku

Opened by a Japanese couple, this pretty much ticks all the boxes: fine sushi and sashimi prepared with attention to both detail. Japanese meat dishes and soups; and moderate prices. Located near the beach in Lapad but slightly set back from the tourist areas in a residential neighbourhood, it’s popular with the locals and also does a brisk take-out trade. Japanese spirits and beers help to stretch out a long and satisfying evening.

→ Kneza Domagoja 1F (020 311 493, facebook.com/ShizukuDubrovnik)

Stara Loza

Located on the top floor of the quirky, contemporary art-filled Prijeko Palace hotel, Stara Loza’s

elegant chairs and tables spread beneath a huge chandelier, with an eye-popping array of pop-art paintings and photographs looking on from the walls. The food is as extravagant as the surroundings, with a menu that pairs local seafood with a European flair for creative endeavour: their lobster tail with leeks, sea-urchin pulp and truffles (280Kn) is a particularly sensual barrage of flavours. The sweet trolley is another showcase for Stara Loza's artistic side; white chocolate mousse with fruits and berries (65Kn) is just one of several temptations. You'll need an advance reservation if you want to dine on one of the five tables on the stunning rooftop terrace; there's also pavement seating at ground level right on Prijeko.

→ Prijeko 24 (020 321 145, prijekopalace.com)



Stara Loza

Takenoko

Takenoko lays legitimate claim to being the first Japanese restaurant in Croatia – when they set up their flagship in Zagreb, the country sat up and took notice. Fifteen years on, the capital brims with Asian-fusion joints and Takenoko is thriving in Dubrovnik. Head chef Mario Starman creatively melds Asian flavours with superbly fresh Mediterranean ingredients – the result is first-class sushi platters

and Cro-Asian dishes served in artful arrangements. The minimally adorned restaurant has a contemporary, relaxed feel, with a spectacular terrace overlooking the City Walls.

→ Hvarska 2 (020 694 609, takenoko.hr)

Trattoria Carmen

Set down a quiet sidestreet near Dubrovnik Aquarium, the family-owned Trattoria Carmen crafts

fresh, traditional Italian cuisine with a local flavour. Scampi comes buzara-style or grilled, burrata cheese with marinated shrimps is a tasty starter, octopus fritters are a curiosity worth investigating and osso buco is a solid main. Finish it off with classic Dalmatian dessert rozata. Croatian and international wines may accompany.

→ Ulica kneza Damjana Jude 10 (020 301 337, trattoria-carmen-dubrovnik.com)

Trinity Oriental Fusion Lounge

Sister restaurant of popular sushi joint Shizuku, Trinity delivers quality Thai, Chinese and Japanese cuisine in an enjoyably chic space: vases stand in wall niches illuminated by red-purplish light; wine bottles are mounted in the ceiling above the bar. The menu revolves around sushi, Pad Thai, Chinese noodle dishes, and green and red curries: no surprises therefore, but everything is so perfectly prepared that you are pretty much guaranteed a suave and satisfying experience. They give you what you already know, in other words, but do it superbly well. And you do get the fine-dining touch of a tasty (and un-billed) amuse-bouche to start with. Music is electro-ethnic chill-out; service sharp and attentive.

→ Mata Vodopića 2A (020 752 575, facebook.com/TrinityDubrovnik)

Wanda

The estimable Wanda breathed life into staid Prijeko at a time when Dubrovnik was little but tourist-trap restaurants. The culinary scene has since changed, but Wanda remains a quality dining destination, with simple, well-conceived dishes using fresh, locally sourced ingredients: soups, appetisers, salads, risottos.

→ Prijeko 8 (098 944 9317, wandarestaurant.com)



Trattoria Carmen

CAFES AND PATISSERIES

Gabi

A tiny bakery-cum-shop in a not-exactly-high-street location, Gabi does a roaring trade with in-the-know locals appreciative of a well-made cake with a touch of artistic originality. Gabi is an outstanding exponent of the spongy-side of life, with delicate muffins (fruits, berries, ginger; not just chocolate), soft and springy carrot cakes, and a delightfully sticky rogač (carob) torte shouting “eat me!” from the display cabinet. There are always a couple of gluten-free options. Unfortunately there's nowhere to sit and eat – but it's still a good place to pick up the dessert for your picnic. Little publicized and a real find, it's not as off-the-beaten-track as all that – for those staying in Lapad or Babin kuk it's a mere 5-minute detour from the #6 bus route into town, so there's no reason why you shouldn't pop in.

→ Od Batale 25 (091 761 9550, slasticarna.com)

Mala Truba

The latest talk of the town when it comes to cakes, Mala Truba (“Blow Your Little Trumpet” might be a creative translation) is located up an alley behind Mercante, a shopping mall much used by locals but in which tourists rarely tread. Imaginative, own-recipe cheesecakes, tortes and biscuits fill a small glass counter; there's a tiny ledge outside where you can stand and scoff them. Signature treats include Fjorin (20Kn), a soft succulent almond cake; and Orlandina (24Kn), a delectable finger of raspberry mousse atop a crunchy chocolatey base. Sweets apart, Mala Truba also does a superb sour-dough loaf (though beware it sells out by lunchtime) and occasional savoury specials such as soparnik (the delicious garlic-and-swiss chard pie indigenous to Dalmatia).

→ Vukovarska 22 (facebook.com/Mala-truba-28512822108172)

Slatki Kantun

Located in the lower storeys of the hillside-hugging Hotel More (and accessible from the shoreline pathway that starts just beyond Lapad beach), Slatki Kantun or

“Sweet Corner” comes with a cute little swimming pool and sweeping views across Lapad Bay – but can't quite escape the functionality of the hotel café. The good news is that the cakes are superb, although the menu is limited to a few signature desserts that show off what they do best – lemon meringue tart, fruit pavlova and carrot cake feature among the regulars. Prices are pretty steep but cakes of this quality are probably worth it. Slatki Kantun's coffee is reliably thick and strong, and an extensive cocktail menu (75-95kn) provides an adequate excuse to pop by in the evenings and see how the sunset is doing.

→ Nike i Meda Pucića 13A (020 494 200, hotel-more.hr)

BARS

The Bar by Azur

Combining fresh Adriatic ingredients with Asian flavours, hit restaurant Azur has been elevated to a cult-like status in Dubrovnik, with queues of people hemming around the block to tuck into zingy bowls of seafood ramen or ceviche tortillas.

Bar by Azur is a promising addition to Dubrovnik's rather staid cocktail scene – here, concoctions are made with real skill using homemade syrups. The slick bar area is comfortably chic, and the buzz extends to the capricious sun-drenched terraces. Nibbles of fresh mozzarella with spicy gremolata and bacon with grana padano quesadillas provide excellent replenishment. The drinks menu features a wealth of premium liquors and domestic craft beers.

→ Kunićeva 5 (020 454 477, azurvision.com)

Buza and Bard bars

See Dubrovnik Top 20.

Buzz bar

The only bar in a street filled with restaurants, seconds away from Stradun, Buzz has won over a local crowd thanks to its good vibe, pleasant interior of colourful chairs and witty deco, a wide selection of Croatian craft beers and reasonable prices, not an epithet you could grant to its neighbouring restaurants. There's also organic lemonades, cocktails, whiskies and cognacs – and carefully selected rock, pop and jazz.

→ Prijeko 21 (020 321 509, thebuzzbar.wixsite.com/buzz)



Bard bar

Dubrovnik Bars

Casablanca

A bit more clubby these days than the honest-to-goodness bar it used to be, to its credit Casablanca still ignores any pressing need to display pictures of Rick and Ilsa on the runway and concentrates on the serious business in hand, ie drinking and having a damn good time. The crowd tends to be young, a welcome rarity in Dubrovnik.

→ Zamanjina 9 (091 799 5263, facebook.com/casablanca.dubrovnik)

Cele Café

First opened in 1932 by a certain Celestin 'Cele' Šikić, this busy place is one of a gaggle of cafés grouped around the Stradun's bustling eastern end. Given a thorough refit in the winter of 2010-11, Cele was relaunched as a 'brunch&bar', serving all-day breakfasts (omelettes, croissants, cereals), salads, wok-fried dishes and burgers – until 5pm, when it reverts to its primary function as a drinking venue. Cele's sizeable pavement terrace can be mobbed by tourists in high season, and the place only really comes into its own when the midsummer deluge has receded.

→ Stradun 1 (099 423 0400, facebook.com/CeleDubrovnik)

Copacabana Beach

A half-moon of pebbles and gravel set in Seka Bay, Copacabana



is one of Dubrovnik's best beaches. Hedonists can even enjoy table service of cocktails to your sunlounger. The beach is fabulous for families - there's a giant stretch of coastline for the kiddies to explore, while you can get acquainted with the best of Croatian wine from the beach bar, or enjoy a post-swim massage.

→ Ivana pl. Zajca bb (098 335 615, thebeachdubrovnik.com)

Cogito Coffee

Reinventing the idea of the terrace café as a medieval-alleyway

bar, the main Dubrovnik outlet of the Zagreb-based boutique coffee roasters peeps out invitingly from beneath one of the broad archways that span the cobbles in this quarter of town. With a counter inside and a couple of wooden benches outside, it's the ideal place for informal mingling or picking up a takeaway. As you might expect from a coffee specialist they spread their net rather wider than the average Croatian kafić, with trained baristas serving up smooth espressos as well as grappling

with the demands of filter, Chemex and cold-brew coffees. Delectable tubs of artisan ice cream from Samobor's Medenko fill the counter-side freezer cabinet. A new branch of Cogito, just outside the Ploče Gate at Hvarska 2, is set to open in summer 2019.

→ Od Pustjerne 1 (cogitocoffee.com)

Culto

This is probably the smartest and certainly the largest, of four adjoining bars. Its drinks list is the biggest too and needs the long bar to accommodate the huge range of ingredients for intriguing cocktails. Low slung black and-chocolate sofas line the white walls, with a separate area at the far end that can be curtained off. A lower level at the front provides golden bucket seats and there are video screens for daytime distraction. DJs take over at weekends.

→ Iva Vojnovića 37 (099 314 6496)

Dubrovnik Beer Company (DBC)

Brewing taproom with outdoor terrace. See Dubrovnik Top 20.

→ Obala Ivana Pavla II 15 (095 356 96 20, dubrovackapivovara.hr)

D'Vino

See Dubrovnik Top 20.

Festival Café

This landmark venue on Stradun is pricey even by Dubrovnik standards but popular all the same – everyone meets at the Festival. Breakfasts go for 60kn, dishes of the day 80kn and seasonal mixed drinks 50kn, eg a frozen

cappuccino with Bailey's. It's got a proper bar counter, a long interior brightened by vintage coffee ads and outdoor seating. Fruit frappés and home-made cakes complete the picture.

→ Stradun 28 (020 321 148, cafestival.com)

Glam Café

There's never been a better place than Palmotićevo to mix your drinks, with much-loved wine bar D'vino on one side of the street, and craft-beer temple Glam Café right opposite. With two metres of alley space dividing the two, it's a great spot to mooch and mingle. Glam Café is typical of the cupboard-sized bars in streets like this, with three tables outside and just about enough room for a five-a-side football team inside. Pretty much everything in the Croatian craft-beer repertoire can be found in Glam's well-stocked fridge, although it's the chance to guzzle Dubrovnik Beer Company brews on draught that gives the place it's "let's-go-back-there-for-one-more" status.

→ Palmotićevo 5 (091 151 8257, facebook.com/glamdu)

Gusto Giusto

The gleam of a beautifully-maintained, wheel-operated prosciutto-slicing machine is the first thing that catches your eye when strolling past Gusto Giusto, one of those tiny three-stool bars that help make the Old Town such a happy hunting ground for quirky watering holes. It's primarily a wine-and-charcuterie bar, with a well-chosen selection of Croatian and Italian wines and a chiller cabinet stacked with delicious meats and cheeses – most of which are sourced directly from that food-mad, boot-shaped country to the west. The ham-and-cheese platters (100-200kn) will go down a treat if you're going to be sticking around for a glass or two, while the deli sandwiches (45kn) are a serious cut above the usual fast-food fare, featuring mortadella, pecorino cheese and delicious, succulent ham.

→ Antuninska 3 (091 975 1959, facebook.com/dubrovnikitalianeatery)

Libertina

This characterful shoebox of a bar is known as 'Luci' after Luci Capurso, owner and ex-member of vintage beat combo Dubrovački Trubaduri. Shying away from his

Eurovision Song Contest past, Luci serves the regulars, pleasingly oblivious to the piles of money being made at inferior bars on his doorstep.

→ Zlatarska 3 (020 321 526)

Love bar

Located just uphill and round the corner from the gritty Gruž harbourfront, Love Bar is like a secluded little world that the rest of Dubrovnik is yet to touch. With a minimalist box of an interior and an enormous terrace looking out towards the twinkling lights of the harbour, it's an extraordinary evocative spot and one that boasts one of the best sunset-views in the city. The drinks menu doesn't take any risks, with a mainstream mix of wines, beers and spirits. However there's a good choice of cocktails, shots and mojitos – the fresh mint for which is grown in pots out on the terrace. Music ranges from clubby dance grooves to hipster pop, and there are local bands playing on the terrace just about every week in summer.

→ Andrije Hebranga 95 (091 200 0132, lovebardubrovnik.com)

NoneNina Bar

Formerly part of the Hemingway chain and now sailing under its own flag, this prominent cocktail bar opposite the Rector's Palace offers mixed drinks by the glass or pitcher for four. No real surprises among the long selection,

Daiquiris and Mojitos mixed with Havana 3, a combination of Pernod and Champagne in a Death in the Afternoon, and a pleasant buzz around the bar and terrace.

→ Pred Dvorom 4 (098 915 9909)

Razonoda

This fine wine bar in town is set in the five-star surroundings of the Pucić Palace. Dalmatian labels comprise the bulk of the extensive selection: Pelješac reds such as an excellent dry Dingač, a deep Miloš-Plavac and a gentle, flowery Grgić; a Pošip white from Korčula or Vugava from Vis. Istrian and Slavonian selections feature heavily too. Local pršut ham and cheeses can be ordered, plus pastries and desserts.

→ Pucić Palace, Od Puča 1 (020 326 222, thepucicpalace.com)

The Kop

You don't have to be a fan of Liverpool FC to be touched by the idea of a bar in a faraway land that has the lyrics to You'll Never Walk Alone written on the wall beside the door. Pass through the portal and you will find yourself in a convivial, slightly submerged neighbourhood café with a significant – but by no means overpowering – amount of football memorabilia on the walls. In summer the Koppites set their chairs and tables out on a nearby quayside that comes with a famously grand view – with the

Old Town walls on one side, and Lovrijenac fortress on the other, it's arguably the most splendid café terrace in the city. Get yourself smartened up ready for selfies.

→ Od Tabakarje 5 (098 977 4095, facebook.com/cafebarthekop)

NIGHTLIFE

Banje Beach restaurant, lounge & club

Banje is also a nightspot open between early May and late September. Set on the main public beach just beyond Ploče Gate, this cocktail lounge showcases DJs and occasionally stages fashion parties.

→ Banje Beach, Frana Supila 10B (099 314 6485, banjebeach.com)

Culture Club Revelin

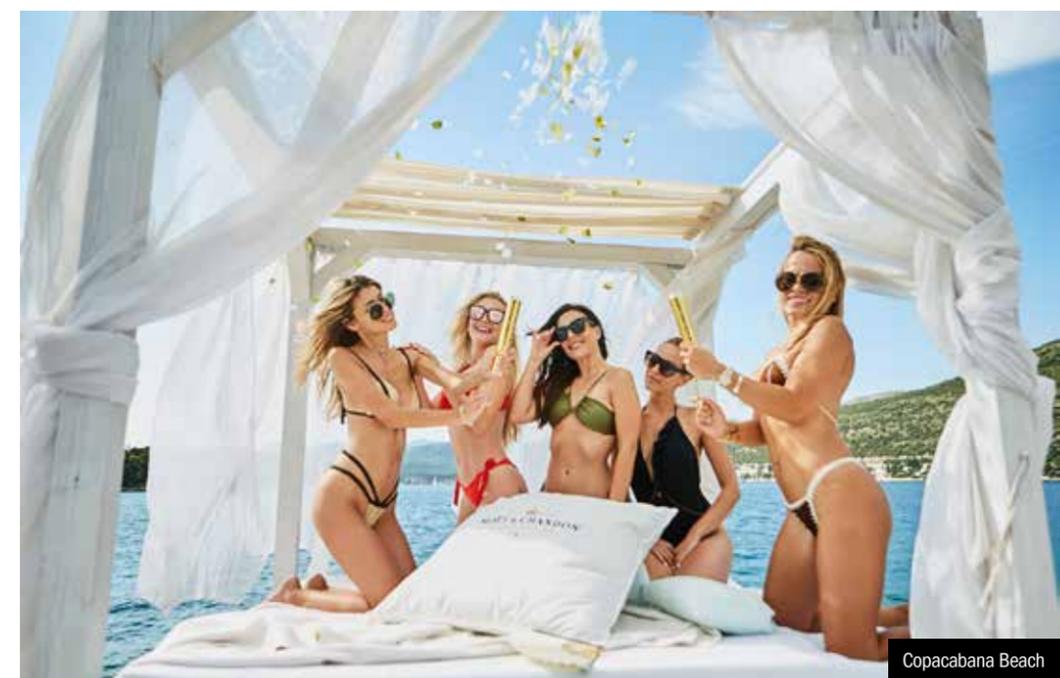
See Dubrovnik Top 20.

Copacabana Beach

Attracting carefree holidaymakers in the sun-filled days, Copacabana's beach and on-site restaurant has more than enough appeal to allow you to linger long into dusk. If you do, you will discover Copacabana's other strongest point. With only one real nightclub to the whole city, Dubrovnik is starved of late night options beyond the fine restaurants and dinky city bars. With the whole beach to range on



Dubrovnik Beer Company (DBC)



Copacabana Beach

Dubrovnik

and with the ever-present and cool dance music soundtrack turned up after dark, Copacabana is one of your best nightlife options in the city. Where else can you roam half naked in the night, falling into the cooling sea at any moment you see fit, cocktail in hand, the evening's party just yards away from your spot in the waves?

→ Ivana pl. Zajca bb (098 335 615, thebeachdubrovnik.com)

Lazareti

This would be the best year-round nightclub if they ran a regular programme – as things stand at the moment live gigs and DJ appearances come in flurries, with details provided on the Facebook site. It is set in an old stone ex-quarantine barracks. Pay your money at the gate, and head down to an open courtyard under the stars. The main building is at the bottom: a stage for DJ decks and live acts; a dance floor, and a balcony area with bar.

→ Lazareti complex, Frana Supila 8 (facebook.com/lazaretidbk)

SHOPPING

Artur Gallery

This little gallery puts on regular exhibitions by local artists, as well as art workshops. The gift shop sells tasteful souvenirs, jewellery and albums related to Dubrovnik. Look out for books by Italian cartoonist Osvaldo Cavandolli. His drawings found inspiration in Dubrovnik thanks to gallery owner Tea Batinić, who invited him here a few years ago. The result was 'Dubrovnik', 35 stories written by Batinić, illustrated by Cavandolli.

→ Od Domina 2 (020 323 773, arturgallery.com)

Clara Stones Coral Concept Store

Since opening this store in 2011, Milan-born Vittorio Ceccarini has produced beautifully handcrafted jewellery from red coral in a variety of unique designs. Artefacts are created in the workshop downstairs – staff would be happy to show you how.

→ Nalješkovićeva 3 (020 321 140, clarastones.com)

D'Vino

See Dubrovnik Top 20.



Copacabana Beach

Dubrovačka kuća

High-quality offerings here include local spirits, sweets, posters, olive oils, regional wines and bath salts. A link with the Museum of Arts and Crafts in Zagreb means beautiful ceramics and glassware are available at affordable prices.

→ Sv. Dominika bb (020 322 092)

Gruž market

The main market in Dubrovnik for fruit, vegetables and, alongside, fish. In a section of the ruined garden of the Gundulić summer villa, Gruž market is larger and cheaper than the one in the Old Town, Gundulićeva poljana. Shoppers and restaurateurs arrive here, near the ferry terminal, from early in the morning, hoping to find the best goods. Few words are exchanged with the vendors, who have come down from the Neretva delta, Konavle or Herzegovina over the border. With a little luck, locals find the best cabbage for zelena menestra (cabbage, smoked pork and potato), goats' cheese for salads, the best eggs for rožata (the local version of crème caramel) and, for traditional Ragusan orange cake, oranges from Lopud. Prices are mostly fixed and haggling doesn't tend to happen. A little discount might be easiest at the end of the working day, when vendors are looking to offload all their stock. If you are fond of fine fish, get here by 7am, when it arrives from the Elafiti islands. The stock varies from day to day, but Fridays is usually the best. Although everyone here moans about the cost of living these days, the most expensive fish quickly vanishes.

→ Obala Stjepana Radića

Maria Store

See Dubrovnik Top 20.

Gundulićeva poljana market

A good place to pick up your beach picnic contents is this popular market in the heart of the Old Town. It mainly sells fruit and veg but you'll also find nuts, olive oil, lavender, honey and local spirits.

→ Gundulićeva poljana

Lapad market

Lapad's sunken market square can be found where the pathway to the beach meets the main road to the Old Town, kralja Tomislava. Most mornings you will find locals picking up the usual bags of apples and tomatoes but on Sundays a handful of stalls are given over to bric-à-brac – books, postcards, stamps, medals – and you might find a more characterful souvenir here than is otherwise available on Stradun.

→ Setalište kralja Tomislava/Mata Vodopića

Life according to Kawa

A showroom-sized shop devoted to Croatian-made artisan and designer products, Life According to Kawa is just what you need after being bored to desperation by the mugs, fridge magnets and plastic dragons of the regular gift shops. The title comes from the Kawaguchis, the Croatian-Canadian couple who turned a garage just outside the Old Town into a friendly store filled with the kind of well-designed products they might want to own themselves. It covers the whole gamut of local fashion

accessories, domestic design and deli food; a broad slew of price ranges ensuring that there's something to suit all aspirations. To give you some idea of the range: there's Sapunoteka soaps and cosmetics made from local plants and herbs; gourmet salt from the Pag salt pans; coffee beans from Croatian roasters Cogito; teas by Rijeka-based blenders Samovar; sunglasses by Sherrif & Cherry; earrings and necklaces by Iva Stojković; Levin-Coco's shirts and bags; and Pepiere's slim backpacks made from woven cornstalks and leather flaps. Kawa's own-design T-shirts run the gamut from the witty and ironic to the playfully grotesque – whatever it says on the chest, it will be different from the usual souvenir-fodder available elsewhere.

→ Hvarska 2 (020 696 958, facebook.com/KAWA-LIFE8)

Uje

The Dubrovnik outlet for this Split-based deli outfit, sells jams, pickled capers, marinated seafood and all manner of Mediterranean goodies. It's also an ideal place to stock up on Brachia olive oil from the island of Brač.

→ Stradun 5 (091 605 0111, uje.hr)

Vinoteka Miličić

Halfway along Stradun, this small, friendly shop contains a reasonable selection of local and international wines. For a standard bottle to take to the beach, you'll find cheaper at one of the local groceries outside the Pile Gate.

→ Stradun (020 321 777)

ARBOTEGA

Pearl of Adriatic

Arbotega is a brand of natural cosmetics developed by the Dubrovnik family Vlahušić.

Arbotega is an original and protected name from Dubrovnik, and it originates from the Arboretum Trsteno, the Apothecary (the second oldest pharmacy in Europe from 1317, located in the Franciscan monastery) and Art Bottega, the art of commerce which made Dubrovnik rich and free – the famous Benedikt Kotruljević also wrote the first book on double-entry book-keeping Libro del Arte dela Mercatura.

The gathering and processing of medicinal herbs is a long-standing tradition of the Dubrovnik region. In the twentieth century, hundreds of workers were employed by the company Dalmacijabilje, as well as by private

cooperatives operating in Doli, while the entire rural part of Dubrovnik (especially women) gathered pyrethrum, wormwood, immortelle, bay laurel and other medicinal herbs.

They processed the herbs and exported them all over the world. Epidaurum (on the site of today's Cavtat) was a Greek colony – the largest sanatorium of the old world was in need medicinal herbs, and Apollo, the god of beauty, and Asclepius, the god of medicine who lived in Epidaurum, found the richest and most sophisticated preparations in the Dubrovnik region and then sent them to Greece. The DNA of plants and the Apollonian spirit of beauty, art and medicine are woven into each and every product.

Natural Cosmetics Arbotega include three product lines, namely the luxurious line, the day and night line and the sun line.



The luxury beauty line Cvijeta Zuzoric was named in honor of the poet, muse and beauty from Dubrovnik who was famous all over Europe for her beauty and wisdom. She lived for 96 years and is considered to be one of the first European feminists. The Italian poet Torquato Tasso devoted a series of sonnets and madrigals to her. In the Pearls of the Adriatic, secret ingredients carob and pearls which kept Cvijeta beautiful for decades are mentioned.

Arbotega Day and Night has five immortelle, fig, grape and quince-based products, as well as two gift packages, day and night creams.

Lokrum Sun currently includes two products, tanning perforate St John's-wort, organic honey and olive oil-based marmalade, and goat milk yogurt for skin hydration.

You can buy Arbotega products in:

Duty free shop Airport Dubrovnik, on Dubrovnik's main street Stradun: in shops TIC, Plus, Domus Christie Pharmacy, Čebulc Pharmacies in Dubrovnik and in Zagreb at Tkalčićeva 21.



Natural beauty

Get the goodness of the Mediterranean in every bottle of Arbotega's botanical cosmetics



A BEAUTIFUL walled city rising out of the sea, Dubrovnik's fabled architecture never ceases to amaze. The city is encircled by defensive walls that protected this former republic for centuries, lapped by the sea. Dubrovnik has been one of the most important ports on the Adriatic for 2000 years, its walls defending its status and commerce through transfers in ownership and even its life as an independent city state. But, the life and industry of Dubrovnik's residents have never been restricted to within these dry walls.

For centuries, the women of Dubrovnik have trodden paths into the wilderness surrounding the city, collecting local wild herbs like pyrethrum, wormwood, immortelle and bay laurel for traditional remedies. Indeed, it is claimed that in Epidaurum, the Greek colony that once existed in nearby Cavtat, Apollo, the god of beauty, and Asclepius, the god of medicine, found the richest and most sophisticated herbal preparations and sent them home to Greece.

Dubrovnik's Arbotega, run by the family Vlahušić is named after Arboretum Trsteno, the ancient natural pharmacy and Art Bottega, the art of commerce which made Dubrovnik rich and free. But, not only in its name does the company keep alive the traditions of Dubrovnik. Arbotega's all-natural products rely on the knowledge of hundreds of years to create three product lines which offer a kinder and chemical-free alternative to contemporary equivalents.

Cvijeta Zuzoric is a luxury line named after a Dubrovnik muse renowned for her beauty. The everyday Arbotega Day and Night has five immortelle, fig, grape and quince-based products plus day and night creams. Lokrum Sun has two treatments to salve your summer skin, using St John's Wort, organic honey, olive oil and goat's milk yoghurt.

Discover the benefits of Dubrovnik's ancient herbal treatments in Arbotega, effective, all-natural alternatives that are kind to your skin.

HOTELS

Hotel Excelsior Dubrovnik

Revamped in 2017, what is arguably Dubrovnik's most prestigious hotel has been accommodating discerning visitors since 1913. Back then a private villa, converted into a hotel in 1930, it has seen royalty and A-list movie stars come and go. Acquired by the Adriatic Luxury Hotels group in 2000, it now features three restaurants, a spa area with Roman and Turkish baths, a fresh-water pool and a piano bar. Note also valet parking and a limousine service at your disposal.

→ Frana Supila 12 (020 353 000, adriaticluxuryhotels.com)

Villa Dubrovnik

The Villa Dubrovnik is a stunningly located, superbly appointed five-star, set on a rocky outcrop a complimentary boat journey from the Old Town. Breakfasts and sunset cocktails take in the magnificent view. Far enough away (1.5km/one mile) from the Old Town crowds to warrant a handy water shuttle service there and back five times a day, the summer-only Villa Dubrovnik allows tranquillity and isolation. All of the property's 56 rooms, set on descending terraces, have sea and Old-Town views, and all are beautifully appointed with access to a stretch of private beach, and pools indoor and out. For many, the most attractive facility, at sunset at least, is the Bar Giardino, a verdant, panoramic terrace and the ideal spot for a cocktail before the last boat to town. The Mediterranean flavours of the Restaurant Pjerin may just force you to stay, all the same. In the end, it comes down to detail: the bed linen of Egyptian cotton, the teakwood sea terrace and the goose-liver terrine with fresh black truffles on the room-service menu.

→ Vlaha Bukovca 6 (020 500 300, villa-dubrovnik.hr)

Irundo Dubrovnik – Amoret Apartments

Thirteen wonderfully decorated apartments at three different locations in the Old Town. All come with kitchenette, TV and free WiFi. In summer, stays of under four nights will be subject to a slight surcharge, but prices are still very



Hotel Bellevue

good for the quality of the accommodation and the location.

→ Dinka Ranjine 5 (01 8895 433, dubrovnik-amoret.com)

Berkeley Hotel

Opened in 2007, this lovely aparthotel just across from the main ferry terminal comprises 20 beautiful suites and one apartment, conceived by ex-Sydney restaurateurs Nick and Marija. Long-term stays are also encouraged with overnight stays on one of two yachts. The small rooftop pool is a bonus.

→ Andrije Hebranga 116A (020 494 160, facebook.com/berkeleyhoteldu)

Dubrovnik Apartment Source

Couple Andrew and Michelle Kehoe moved here in 2006 and formed this apartment and villa rental company dealing with quality properties in and around the city. All have been personally checked out and some of the villas would suit parties of wedding guests – the reason for the Kehoes' first visit.

→ Ivana Matijaševića 14 (099 613 6418, dubrovnikapartmentsource.com)

Country home Musladin

A rural retreat situated in the village of Ljubač near Dubrovnik, Musladin recreates aspects traditional Dalmatian life for curious visitors looking to add a cultural dimension to their holiday. Guests can help themselves to organic herbs and vegetables from the gardens, or order peka dishes cooked under an iron bell for several hours

by the hosts, who deliver it to your table dressed in traditional garb. The apartments are nicely presented with cute rustic touches.

Ljubač 12 (099 303 1559, countryhome-musladin.com)

Dubrovnik Sun Gardens

Ten kilometres north of town, sprawling across the seafront just below the pleasingly rustic village of Orašac, this former Radisson partner property is now under the umbrella of the Leading Hotels of the World. A self-contained resort with a rocky beach, it has wonderful views, well-tended gardens and pretty much everything you need for a hassle-free vacation. A cluster of bars and eateries around the forum-like 'Market Place' augment the main hotel restaurants, and there is a huge range of beauty treatments on offer at the spa centre.

Accommodation is in immaculate hotel rooms or in 'residences': apartments ranging in size from one-bedroom to three-bedroom family affairs with kitchenette. The only possible drawback is location: public transport from Orašac to Dubrovnik is far from ideal (especially at night), and the shuttle boats and buses offered by the hotel don't run that often out of season.

→ Na Moru 1, Orašac (020 361 500, dubrovniksungardens.com)

Fresh Sheets B&B

Finding city-centre B&B accommodation that lives up to its promise is very much the

Holy Grail of Adriatic tourism, a quest made slightly easier with Fresh Sheets B&B. Squeezed into the second floor of a stone house just behind the Cathedral, the property certainly offers the kind of Dubrovnik views you dream about, with some rooms facing out towards the Rector's Palace; others overlooking the lively fruit and veg market of Gundulićeva poljana. Reached by stone staircase, rooms (mostly doubles, although there is one studio apartment and one two-room family apartment) are furnished in simple but contemporary style, and have the added benefits of cable TV and air-con. Breakfast is served in a cosy communal kitchen, and help-yourself tea and coffee are available throughout the day.

→ Bunićeva poljana 6 (091 896 7509, freshsheetskathedral.com)

Grand Hotel Park

A bold wedge of modern architecture set back slightly from the Lapad seafront, the Park has 224 rooms in relaxing peachy-creamy colours and fitted with hydromassage shower units. Facilities include a sauna, steam bath, massage and beauty treatments, and indoor pool. There's also a respectably sized outdoor pool, although family-friendly Lapad beach is only two minutes' walk away.

→ Šetalište kralja Zvonimira 39 (020 434 444, grandhotel-park.hr)

Grand Villa Argentina

See Dubrovnik Top 20.



Sheraton®

DUBROVNIK RIVIERA HOTEL



Restaurant Leut

A la carte restaurant Leut, located at Sheraton Dubrovnik Riviera Hotel captures the best of Mediterranean food, creatively paired with local wines in an extensive menu list.

Opening hours: 12 AM - 11 PM

Contact and bookings: +385 20 601 375

Further information at: www.sheratondubrovnikriviera.hr

Dubrovnik

Hotel Bellevue

A luxurious spa hotel, a landmark and a feat of engineering in one, the Bellevue is cut into 30-metre-high cliffs close to the Old Town. Its rooms, most with balconies, of local wood and tasteful browns all enjoy sea views, as does the 500-square-metre spa with themed showers, and the highly rated Vapor restaurant. Natural light is always the star of the show at Bellevue. The Nevera Beach restaurant occupies a man-made cave right beside the beach.

→ Pera Čingrije 7 (020 330 000, adriaticluxuryhotels.com)

Hotel Dubrovnik Palace

This ten-floor, 308-room luxury hotel is set in woodland paths at the tip of Lapad, in full view of the Elafiti Isles. This is what everyone sees from their balcony, from the Maslina Tavern restaurant, Lanterna Glorijet poolside bar and the Sunset Lounge cocktail bar, not to mention the expansive, panoramic spa area, with its selection of massage treatments and beauty procedures.

→ Masarykov put 20 (020 430 000, adriaticluxuryhotels.com)

Hotel Lapad

Overlooking the Gruž harbour waterfront, this well-known three-star consists of a fin-de-siècle façade facing the main road towards the Babin kuk headland, containing the lobby and reception area; and, the other side of an outdoor pool and a pleasant courtyard, the accommodation building divided into two wings. Of the nearly 200 rooms, the ones in the older wing are cheaper. Despite an impressive recent refit, the Lapad still has a taste of times gone by, Handy for Lapad and the Old Town, and a ten-minute walk from the ferry port and bus station.

→ Lapadska obala 37 (020 455 555, hotel-lapad.hr)

Hotel More

Built into the Babin kuk cliff-face, this lush, waterfront five-star comprises 34 luxurious rooms and three suites, most with a sea view. There's an outdoor pool, gym, lounge bar and the Tramuntana and More restaurants of very decent standard. An extra 40 rooms were added for the 2017 season.

→ Kardinala Stepinca 33 (020 494 200, hotel-more.hr)



Kazbek Hotel

Hotel Petka

A convenient place to flop after that long bus or ferry journey, the three-star Petka now has a few extras after an upgrade. Most of the 100-plus rooms have a balcony overlooking Gruž bay and harbour, and access to a gym and good restaurant. The full-board supplement is a snip.

→ Obala Stjepana Radića 38 (020 410 500, hotelpetka.hr)

Hotel Stari Grad

The boutique Stari Grad is a rare find in the Old Town, located in a quiet street off the main square. Tastefully renovated in 2013, this 16th-century nobleman's house has been modernised without compromising its period features; the eight quiet, contemporary rooms are large and staff are eager to please. Their Green & Purple café bar is a funky place to sit for a drink, and their fifth-floor restaurant Above5 has a beautiful terrace that overlooks the Old Town, sea and neighbouring islands.

→ Od Sigurate 4 (020 322 244, hotelstarihrad.com)

Hotel Uvala

The Uvala has a spacious spa with full treatments, indoor and outdoor pools, a sauna and solarium. The other four in the same group – Adriatic, Komodor, Splendid and Vis – are resort hotels on the same main road in Lapad.

→ Masarykov put 5A (020 433 580, hotel-uvala-dubrovnik.hr)

Importanne Hotels & Resort

The opening of the Royal Blue Hotel in 2017, complementing the newly renovated Neptun and Ariston, luxury flagship the Royal Princess and suite-equipped Royal Palm, completes this impressive, upscale hotel complex on the Lapad peninsula. Along with the five hotels, the elegant Villa Elita sits in pine forest. In addition, you'll find a Blue Flag beach surrounded by pine trees, massage rooms, saunas, seawater pools and freshwater ones both indoor and out. Airport transfers are among the many other services offered.

→ Kardinala Stepinca 31 (020 440 100, importanneresort.com)

Karmen Apartments

Four comfortable year-round apartments are offered at affordable prices – not five minutes' walk from the Old Port. Bohemian touches reflect the past of genial host Marc van Bloemen, whose parents were movers and shakers in the 1960s – there's plenty of original art to complement the tasteful decor. Highly recommended.

→ Bandureva 1 (020 323 433, karmendu.com)

Kazbek Hotel

At the waterfront of Gruž Bay and an easy stroll to the fine-shingle beaches of Lapad, this five-star boutique hotel provides a palatial stay with a dozen beautifully furnished rooms, set in the converted Zamanje family villa (1573). The terracotta-roofed mansion features an attractive

outdoor pool with a bar beside it. Breakfast is made to order, prepared freshly and served to guests on the hotel patio, an enclosed stone courtyard studded with Mediterranean potted plants. The restaurant offers genuinely gourmet food with caught-that-day fish and seafood alongside Adriatic specialties, served beneath a shaded canopy. Breakfast and dinner reservations are also possible for visitors – check with the hotel for availability. Five-star luxury doesn't get more lavish than this – Kazbek's stately rooms include king size beds with Egyptian cotton bedding, gorgeously soft bathrobes and slippers and a range of posh toiletries. A speedboat and yacht are on hand for guests' use.

→ Lapadska obala 25 (020 362 999, kazbekdubrovnik.com)

Maro & Baro Apartments

In a quiet street, only ten minutes' walk away from Dubrovnik's historic centre, is a house with one two-storey and two studio apartments, each with its own entrance. The larger one has a living room, kitchen and bedroom on the second floor – and its own terrace with a view of the Lovrijenac fortress. Two smaller apartments share a terrace and each have a living room, bathroom and kitchen. Dubrovnik is a city of many steps and you'll find this a bit of a climb – by consolation, a fridge full of welcome drinks, juices, beers and regional wines awaits. Airport transfer also offered.

→ Zrinsko Frankopanska 12 (099 303 1559, apartmentsmaroibaro-dubrovnik.com)

Kazbek

Originally the
summer home
of the old
Dubrovnik
aristocracy.

Now the
luxury
five star
boutique
hotel
just ideal for
exclusive use,
executive meetings,
weddings,
honeymoons,
hideaways...

LAID-BACK
LUXURY



Hotel Kazbek
Lapadska obala 25
20000 Dubrovnik
T +385 20 362 900
info@kazbek.hr
www.kazbekdubrovnik.com

Dubrovnik

Pervanovo Apartments

Set in Lapad, these 18 newly built apartments are contained within eight luxury villas, most with balconies, some of which have rather charming sea views and others facing inland. All are equipped with washing machines, air-con and HD TVs.
→ Vatroslava Lisinskog 43-59 (020 362 900, pervanovoapartments.com)

Pucić Palace

A beautiful five-star right in the Old Town, the Pucić Palace weaves old-world heritage with 21st-century convenience. Nineteen rooms are individually decorated, with ample beds and sumptuous linens. Large, sound-proofed windows allow Old-Town views – most notably from the stand-out Gundulić suite, overlooking the market square of the same name. Note the La Capella restaurant on the roof terrace.
→ Od Puča 1 (020 326 222, thepucicpalace.com)

Rixos Libertas

Rixos Libertas has long been one of Dubrovnik's architectural landmarks, originally built in the early 1970s when Croatian modernism was at its peak. Dramatically ranged across a steep hillside in a succession of curving terraces, the hotel was damaged during the 1991-2 siege and spent a long time awaiting reconstruction. Now restored to its former glory, it features superb

views, two-floor spa, two pools and the popular Golden Sun casino. All of it five-star, of course.

→ Liechtensteinov put 3 (020 200 000, libertasdubrovnik.rixos.com)

Rooms Klarisa Palace

Fantastically located, Klarisa Palace offers a palatial stay in the centre of town for an affordable price. The stylishly-renovated townhouses are decorated in neutral tones with exposed wooden beams. Rooms come with private bathrooms, all mod cons and air conditioning. The main draw is the unbeatable location: set in a historic stone building, the Old Town is on your doorstep and the beach an easy ten-minute walk away. Room rates vary from attic rooms to deluxe doubles.
→ Poljana Paska Miličevića 3 (099 222 3360, rooms-klarisa-palace.hotelsdubrovnik.info)

Sheraton Dubrovnik Riviera Hotel

See Dubrovnik Top 20.

Tirena Sunny Hotel

Providing great value for money amid the tranquil environs of the Babin kuk peninsula, the Tirena Hotel is a place to relax and be entertained. As its centrepiece, the three-star Tirena has an expansive, freshwater outdoor pool with swim-up bar for you to sip at your cocktail without having to leave the water. There's also a shallow

children's pool for visiting families. A couple of hundred metres away, Cava Beach is equipped with sun loungers, showers and changing cubicles. Traditional Dalmatian dishes are prepared right in front of you at the buffet restaurant. Guests can also make use of the superior spa facilities at the nearby Valamar Dubrovnik President and Valamar
→ Lacroma Dubrovnik Hotels, Iva Dulčića 36 (020 445 100, valamar.com)

Valamar Argosy Hotel

Striking the perfect balance by providing contemporary relaxation with attentive service, the Valamar Argosy Hotel best suits a romantic getaway à deux. A newly refurbished and upgraded four-star, the Valamar Argosy now features an infinity pool, impressive landscaped gardens, stylish guestrooms and a complete spa complex. With all its quiet, Babin kuk location overlooking the Adriatic, the Valamar Argosy also allows you to take advantage of Cava Beach less than 200 metres away. In the distance beckon the Elafiti islands that you also see on the horizon as you gaze out from restaurant terrace and outdoor pool with sunbathing loungers.
→ Iva Dulčića 140 (020 446 100, valamar.com)

Valamar Club Dubrovnik

The only hotel in Dubrovnik created specifically for families,

the Valamar Club is geared towards fun, relaxation and safety. Operating from April to November, this four-star lays on all kinds of sports and communal activities all summer long. Multilingual children's entertainers lead the activities at the Maro Club, with its ice-cream parties, mini discos and play areas designed for three different age groups. Teenagers can play futsal, volleyball and video games, with free cycle hire for all. Trained, professional staff provide child care by day before live music and shows are provided for all the family in the evening. Adults can go in for parasailing, diving and water skiing, and take advantage of the spa, sauna and gym facilities at the nearby Valamar Dubrovnik President and Valamar Lacroma Dubrovnik Hotels.
→ Iva Dulčića 38 (020 447 100, valamar.com)

Valamar Collection Dubrovnik President Hotel

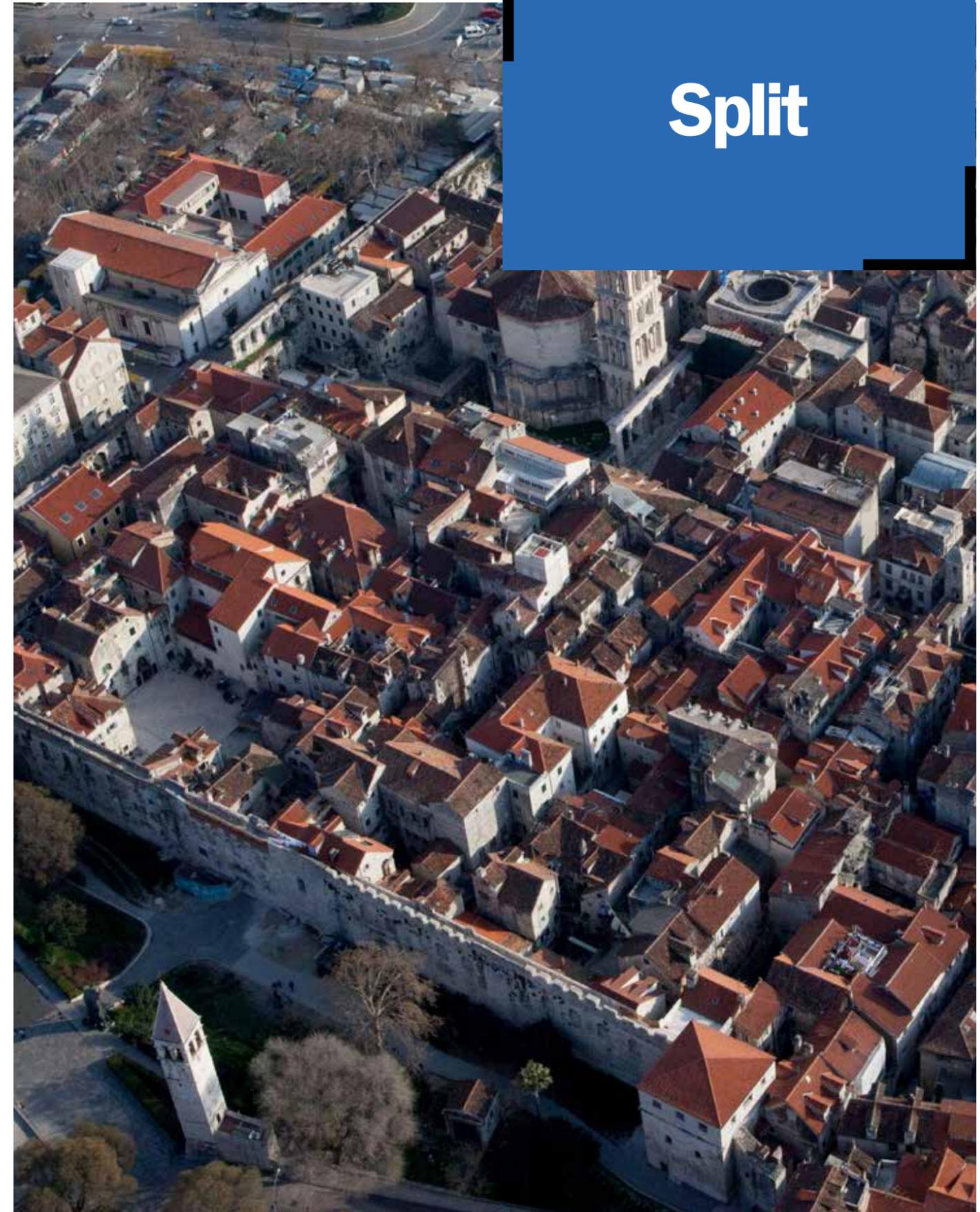
After extensive renewal, this leading lodging of the Valamar group is a natural choice on the peninsula of Babin kuk – and a perfect getaway for couples. Each room has a balcony view of the sea and Elafiti islands beyond, and access to the two pools, spa centre, Miramare restaurant and the hotel's own section of beach. The kids aren't forgotten either, with a full programme of entertainment.
→ Iva Dulčića 142 (020 441 100, valamar.com)

Valamar Lacroma Dubrovnik

The award-winning four-star Valamar Lacroma Dubrovnik caters equally to those visiting for work or pleasure. Surrounded by the pine-tree forests of Babin kuk and white-pebble beaches, the Valamar Lacroma allows you to relax in picturesque tranquillity as well as organise your conference, meeting or exhibition without having to move from the site. With the most extensive MICE facilities in the area, the Valamar Lacroma also features the gourmet restaurant Langusto, a wine bar with a panoramic terrace and top-quality treatments at the in-house Ragusa Spa. Contained within a health complex extending over one square kilometre, you'll find saunas, pools indoor and out, a private spa, lady-spa Afrodita and cardio-fitness.
→ Iva Dulčića 34 (020 449 100, valamar.com)



Sheraton Dubrovnik Riviera Hotel



Split

Split Top 20

High-quality bistros, antiques aplenty and the best bar scene on the Adriatic coast, Croatia's main ferry port is also the country's most promising all-round city-break destination

1 Marvel at Diocletian's Palace

Some 1,700 years on, the Emperor Diocletian would still recognise his palace – or the shell of it, at least. This vast, rectangular complex fell into disuse in the sixth century, 300 years after its construction as a grand retirement home by the locally born leader of the Imperial Guard. Wandering aimlessly around the palace is one of Split's essential experiences. Four gates guard its main entrances: Golden, Silver, Iron and Bronze. Two landmarks stand out: the courtyard of Peristil, a major crossing point, and, beside it, the Katedral Sveti Duje. A viewing point was created in the northern wall of the palace, providing a handy panorama of the complex as a whole.

2 Admire some Meštrović

Croatia's greatest sculptor spent many years in Split, where his villa and studio have since been converted into two major attractions: the Mestrovic Gallery and Kaštelet. The former shows the range of his works, the latter, his remarkable 28-piece work of wooden reliefs depicting the life of Christ. All is set on a leafy boulevard overlooking the seafront, beneath Marjan hill. Nearer to town, you'll find the sculptor's works around the Diocletian Palace: his statue of Grgur Ninski next to the Golden Gate and another of Renaissance writer Marko Marulić at Voćni trg. → Šetalište Ivana Meštrovića 46 (021 340 803, mestrovic.hr)

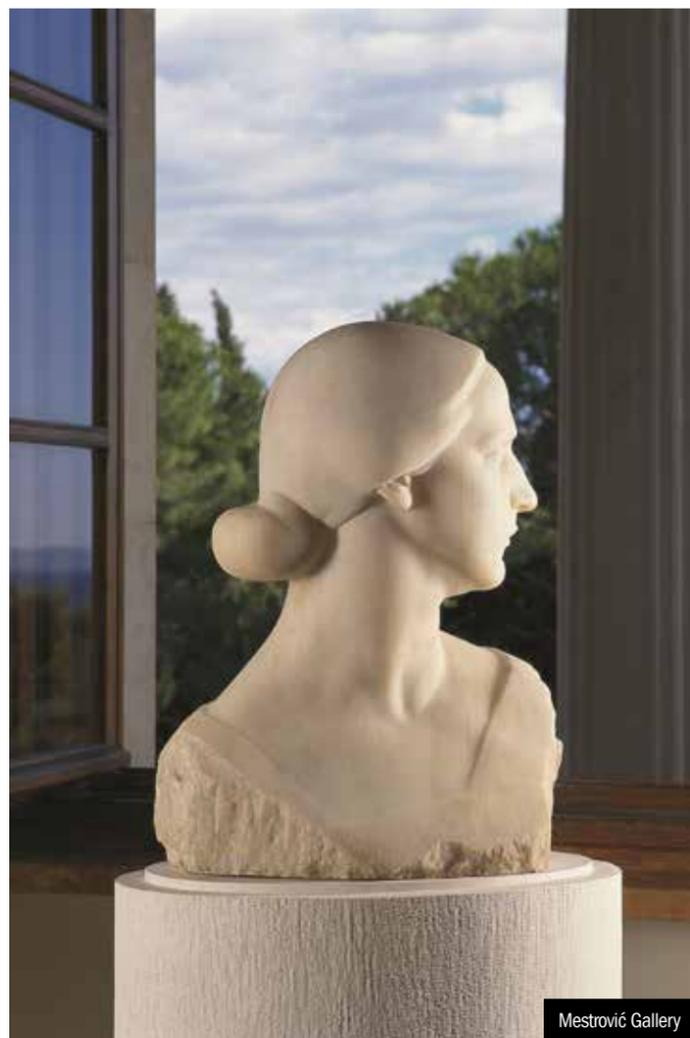
3 Discover Croatian cuisine 2.0 at Nostromo

Run by chef-owner Zlatko Marinović, this is one of the best restaurants in Dalmatia, let alone Split. Traditional recipes are given a contemporary twist – look out for the ray-fish stew and batter-fried sea anemone. Amid the tasteful artwork, locals treat each other or celebrate birthdays over a fish platter for two, as fresh as you'll find anywhere – it's right next to the fish market.

→ Kraj Sv. Marije 10 (091 405 6666, restoran-nostromo.hr)

4 Climb Split's cathedral

Right in the heart of the historic Palace complex



Mestrovic Gallery

stands Cathedral Sveti Duje, once the site of the mausoleum of Roman Emperor Diocletian himself. After admiring the cathedral's sumptuous pulpit, for a nominal entrance fee you can

make the dizzying climb to the top of the bell tower for a stunning panoramic view of the palace, the city and sea beyond. To get a view of the bell tower rather than look out from it, you can scale up to



Peristil

the neighbouring heights of the Vestibule, the southern part of the Peristil and the entrance to what once was the emperor's residence. → Kraj Sv. Duje 5 (021 342 589, katedrala-sv-duje.business.site)

5 Spend the day on Bačvice beach

It's not in the least bit exclusive or elegant, but the point about Bačvice – not ten minutes' walk from Split's main bus station and ferry terminal – is that it's a city beach, used by everyone. A modest half-moon of shingle lined with a couple of bars and few nightclubs just metres from the sea, Bačvice is all things to all men and even provides showers too. If you're feeling adventurous enough, join in with a game of picigin, a popular local pastime for which Bačvice is famous. It involves a group of lithe-looking lads arranged in a circle who use their acrobatic skills to hit a small rubber ball between themselves.

6 See how the Romans lived

Before Split developed, the biggest communal hub here was at Salona, the provincial capital in Roman times when it was a city of 60,000 people. What there is to see today is the remains of an amphitheatre, the public baths and the old city gates, all near the modern-day settlement of Solin about 5km north of Split. Salona

was destroyed by Avar and Slav forces – its residents fled to Split and hid inside the Diocletian's Palace. How they lived can be discovered by a visit to the unsung Archaeological Museum, halfway between the National Theatre and Poljud Stadium.

→ Zrinsko Frankopanska 25 (021 329 340, mdc.hr/split-arheoloski)

7 Mess about on Marjan

Marjan is the hilly green tip of the Split peninsula, with the city spread out below it. Considered both its symbol and guardian angel, Marjan is Split's biggest natural recreational zone. Locals have always had a special relationship with Marjan, dotting it with churches, using it for long walks around its forest paths and swimming at its various beaches in summer. It's a steep but worthwhile climb, rewarded by an unmissable panorama of the string of islands and ships gracefully gliding between them.

8 Pamper yourself at the beautiful Hotel Park

As one of the oldest and revered hotels in Split, the Park underwent a major renovation a few years ago. This has brought the hotel a fifth star, as well as conference facilities, swimming pool, a new terrace and spa – as well as better, bigger and more luxurious rooms and suites. The Bruna restaurant and hotel bar

have also been overhauled. The Park enjoys a prime location right behind Bačvice, Split's most popular beach.

→ Hatzeov perivoj 3 (021 406 400, hotelpark-split.hr)

9 Shop like the Splićani at the city market

Set beside the Silver Gate entry to the Roman Palace, and the main road leading down to the bus station, Split market is a local institution and practically a 24-hour operation. Once the market opens up, the many bars all around it do a roaring trade from unfeasibly early hours of the morning. The main attraction is the fresh fruit and vegetables, a Mediterranean tableau of colours and flavours, presided over by age-old vendors with faces creased by decades in the hot sun.

→ Zagrebačka 37

10 Gasp at an Adriatic sunset

Split's focal embankment, the Riva, is where the city meets over coffee. As the sun moves across the sky, and thoughts turn to the night ahead, customers on the dozen or so café terraces tend to start ordering stiff drinks rather than coffee. This is just the time to sneak into the Diocletian's Palace behind and find yourself at a bar called, in fact, Dioklecijan. Although somewhat basic in appearance, its advantage

is equally simple: a scattering of bar tables set outside, immediately above the Riva. Find one by the three Roman-era arches and you get a perfect view of the sun setting over the Adriatic.

11 Take in a century of Croatian art

The Split Gallery of Fine Arts is home to one of the finest collections of modern and contemporary Croatian art in the country. Founded in 1931, the gallery now holds some 3,500 pieces, including some by Dürer and Venetian Masters from as far back as the 14th century – but it's the modern, Croatian, works that have made the gallery its name. These range from paintings by Vlaho Bukovac to sculptures by Ivan Meštrović. Works in video and new media are also included, lending a contemporary touch and underlining the gallery's position at the cultural forefront.

→ Kralja Tomislava 15 (021 350 110, galum.hr)

12 Discover a chocoholic's paradise

Is chocolate-making the new rock 'n' roll? Well it certainly is as far as Marinko Biškić is concerned. The veteran Split punk rocker is the brains behind Nadalina, a range of unique, Dalmatian-flavoured chocolate bars that have become something of a cult purchase in recent years. Biškić bars contain 70% cocoa solids and a range of this-could-only-be-Dalmatia flavours such as carob, lavender (far tastier than it sounds), dried fig and prošek dessert wine. Not surprisingly given Biškić's background, one of Nadalina's best-selling items is a piece of chocolate in the form of a 7-inch single (featuring retro Italian hit Guarda che Luna), which can actually be played on a turntable prior to eating. Nadalina also lays out tours of its workshops in Solin.

→ Dioklecijanova 6 (021 355 384, nadalina.hr)

13 Slurp down the best fish stew

Gregada is a much-loved domestic fish stew, involving potatoes, parsley, olive oil and chunks of fresh fish. Locals reckon that, with the exception of family dining tables, the best place to find this classic Dalmatian dish is at the Konoba Hvaranin. Under the expert guidance of the



Brasserie on 7

Split Top 20

Radovani family, the gregada here is the house speciality, a healthy, delicious bowl that keeps regulars coming back for more. Being a meeting point for Split writers, journalists and artists (whose books fill the restaurant shelves), Hvaranin is also a place to eargwig erudite conversation as you slurp down your fish stew.

→ Ban Mladenova 9 (099 667 5891, facebook.com/KonobaHvaranin)



Uje Oil Bar

14 Have a night at the opera

Although Split doesn't have an opera house per se, the eclectic, high-brow agenda at the Croatian National Theatre ('HNK') includes opera as well as ballet and local-language theatre. The building itself is a landmark – the national theatres here and in Zagreb played a vital role in the development and promotion of the Croatian language before the country gained any kind of independence. Thus it is with great pride that citizens attend performances here, dressed accordingly, and so creating a real sense of occasion.

→ Trg Gaje Bulata 1 (021 344 999, hnk-split.hr).

15 Mingle on Matejuška

Only a few steps away from the tourist-choked Riva embankment, for centuries Split fishermen have kept their boats in

a small cove known as Matejuška. They still do so today. The only difference is that the string of wavebreaking rocks around Matejuška has become a hang-out for twentysomethings, local and tourist, who meet up over drinks and maybe a strumming guitar or two. It's an easy way and cheap way to have fun: pop into the store opposite, buy a couple of beers, find your spot, gaze out at the sea and chat to the people around you.

16 Strike oil on Dominisova

Uje started out as an olive oil distributor, but now it has its own mini empire, right on Dominisova, four doors long. You can start at the Uje's Dnevni boravak, 'Living Room', with an aperitivo. You then proceed to

Pikulece, Uje's Dalmatian tapas bar, where you can pick at fine hams, cheeses and olives, before moving next door to the main act, the Uje restaurant itself. Meatballs, paštica stew, tuna steak, all is fine and fresh and served in a bistro atmosphere. Afterwards, move alongside to the Uje wine bar, to finish it all off with a glass of crisp Dalmatian white.

→ Dominisova 6 (095 200 8008, uje.hr)

17 Party at Split's alternative beach

While half the city seems to flock to Bačvice, a short walk east from the Old Town, a more discerning, younger and most certainly local clientele goes west, to the beach known as Zvončac. They're not here for the Meštrović Gallery right above,

but for the DJ-driven party spot Jungla, a bastion of alternative music and late-night hijinks, usually without a tourist in sight.

→ Šetalište Ivana Meštrovića 3 (097 679 3330, facebook.com/ClubJunglaSplit)

18 Experience contemporary chic at Cornaro Hotel

The Cornaro is named after the nearby fortification built in Venetian times, and its modern interior design creates an interesting mix of ages. There are no less than 74 rooms, three junior suites and one premium suite. Among the various contemporary in-room features, each has a tablet, allowing guests to order breakfast, check airline schedules and even print boarding passes. There's also a restaurant, wine bar, conference room and spa. All in all, with an excellent central location close to the Gallery of Fine Arts and minutes from the Diocletian's Palace, and all its amenities, the Cornaro is one of Split's most prominent hotels.

→ Sinjska 6 (021 644 200, cornarohotel.com)

19 Experience 2,000 years of sailing

Set in the 17th-century fortress of Gripe, the Croatian Maritime Museum contains the most important artefacts relating to the country's long and proud seafaring history. Exhibition space is not confined to the castle's echoing halls – outside, the courtyard is dominated by displays of entire vessels, including Perina, a traditional Dalmatian fishing boat dating back to 1857. Inside, the exhibition starts with a ceramic container from Roman times, used by fishermen to store their live catch 2,000 years ago.

→ Glagoljaška 18 (021 347 346, hpms.hr)

20 Discover Split's bohemian spirit

The most bohemian of the bars in the palace, the AGC comprises a front courtyard, a small bar leading to a muralled main room with a vaguely erotic theme ('Welcome to the House of Love'), and an upstairs gallery, open according to event. Arty locals mingle with tourists happy to hear reliably good music. It forms one end of the narrow, stepped Dosud bar run.

→ Dosud 10 (095 513 4252, facebook.com/AcademiaClubGhetto)



Meštrović Gallery

ATTRACTIONS

Archaeological Museum

See Split Top 20.

Diocletian's Palace

See Split Top 20.

Ethnographic Museum

Underrated and little visited attraction in the heart of the palace, but well worth the effort of cutting into your holiday time for. This century-old museum focuses on

the traditions of the Dalmatian region, most notably its crafts and trades. Note the delicately carved ceramics and beautifully embroidered costumes in the reconstructed rooms of typical peasant houses. This house itself was the former private residence of the Roman Emperor Diocletian, the main door to his living room still visible. A new attraction is the anteroom at the top of the vestibule, which offers a great view of Split's historic centre.

→ Iza Vestibula 4 (021 344 161, etnografski-muzej-split.hr)

Kaštelet

See Split Top 20.

Katedrala sv Duje

See Split Top 20.

Meštrović Gallery

See Split Top 20.

Split City Museum

This museum in the heart of the palace is mostly worth visiting for the 15th-century Gothic building itself rather than for the sundry paintings and weaponry within. You'll also

find photographs, documents, maps and old papers but the permanent collection appeals more to historians than offer someone from the general public a rough idea how this fascinating port developed. In a more recent development, for an extra fee you can access part of the north wall of the palace for a fine view of the historic centre.

→ Papalić Palace, Papalićeva 1 (021 360 171, mgst.net)

Split Gallery of Fine Arts

See Split Top 20.



Zinfandel Food & Wine bar



Diocletian's Basement



Split City Museum

RESTAURANTS

Adriatic Grašo

Occupying a raised promontory just above the ACI marina, this glass-enclosed pavilion offers superb views of the Adriatic, with outdoor tables stretching along the promontory towards the south. The main, formal part of the restaurant occupies the western side of the building; here the menu concentrates on classy Dalmatian fish and seafood dishes, prepared with a haute-cuisine focus on originality and attention to detail. On the eastern side of the building is the Adriatic Grašo pizzeria – a relaxed and inexpensive place to sample good food and enjoy splendid views. Owner Zoran Grašo is an ex-basketball star and his son Petar is a well-known singer, so it's no surprise that this place is popular with Split society.

→ Uvala Baluni (021 398 560, adriaticgraso.com)

Adriatic Sushi & Oyster Bar

This sushi bar in the heart of the Palace makes best use of local ingredients, featured in the house platter of Dalmatian smoked ham, cheese and oysters, and carpaccios of amberjack, salmon or smoked tuna ham. Takeaway options are offered in 100kn, 200kn and 300kn packages.

→ Carrarina poljana 4 (021 610 644, facebook.com/SushiOysterSplit)

Apetit

This splendid venture from a Croatian who has spent many years in Berlin, lies on the western boundary of Diocletian's Palace, near the Riva, partly occupying a former nobleman's palace. Green partitions, stone walls, bright art and simple furnishings make this a great place for an upmarket lunch. The traditional Dalmatian menu features home-made elements such as pasta and bread, includes a veggie corner plus plenty to appeal to meat and fish lovers. Round it off with home-made chocolate cake.

→ Šubićeva 5 (021 332 549, apetit-split.hr)

ARTIČOK

Since opening in 2016, ARTIČOK has muscled aside competition to become one of the places to eat in Split, its success

based on an appealing mixture of Mediterranean dishes, presented attractively but without too much formal fuss. With colourful, original murals in the dining room, the setting is as enjoyable as what comes on your plate. Signature dishes such as baked squid with artichoke (135Kn) and Dalmatian paštica (beef stewed in wine and prunes; 120Kn) are great introductions to local cooking; starters like swordfish and seabass ceviche hint at a more experimental approach to local ingredients. Look out for inexpensive daily specials chalked up on a board beside the entrance. ARTIČOK's only real problem is that it's not that big, and it's always a good idea to reserve rather than rolling up unannounced.

→ Bana Josipa Jelačića 19 (021 819 324, <https://www.facebook.com/articoksplit>)

Augubio Congo

This Mediterranean newbie sits in a refined palace in Split's historic centre, facing the tourist office across a courtyard. When busy – and, given its location, this is often – not all items are available from an enticingly creative menu but there should be enough to satisfy even the most jaded of Dalmatian travellers. Prices are predictably higher than in less adventurous establishments in the tourist-swamped vicinity.

→ Dioklecijanova 1 (099 323 9671, facebook.com/augubiocongo)

Bistro NoStress

There are very few places in Split that can beat the location of NoStress, right at the busiest part of the city's main square. This should be the perfect spot for a tourist trap. However, NoStress is far from that. Ever since owners Žana and Željko Alfirević hired experienced chef Željko Neven Bremec, NoStress turned into one of the most innovative eateries in town. Its cuisine is mostly created from local ingredients, with ever-changing seasonal specialities such as wild asparagus in spring or home-made sausages in winter. NoStress is thus one of the real leaders in the new wave of Split's gastronomic scene, experimenting with re-interpretations of Dalmatian culinary traditions. Probably the best example of this is the dishes made from boškarin, a cattle breed raised in the traditional way in of Istria, and certified for



Brasserie on 7

authenticity. Žana and Željko are also very dedicated in reviving some of the nicest elements of Split's urban traditions, with regular events such as open-air dancing to nostalgic tunes of the 1970s and 1980s. Recently, they put on smooth live music on weekend nights. If by chance you stumble upon NoStress in the morning, it's also one of the most popular coffee-sipping spots in town.

→ Iza Lože 9 (099 498 1888, bistro-nostress.com)

Bokamorra

The generous glass frontage of Bokamorra allows diners to make the most of the views but, in truth, the lovely interior of the restaurant and the wonderful presentation of their pizzas and cocktails are more than enough to keep your attention inside. Pizzas are all they do, including a dessert option but, luckily, theirs are the best in town. Delicious pizza base is made freshly from dough aged for 48

hours, topped with high-quality ingredients such as cheeses, truffles, salad leaves and air-dried meats. The seating is funky, the booths great for groups including families, the crowd is young, entertained by a great music soundtrack (sometimes even a DJ), although your grandma might complain about the level of the volume. Great staff will try to pair your pizza choice with a cocktail recommendation, which the bar specialises in and which change with the seasons. Bar staff draw on over 150 different spirit options from the back bar to concoct them.

→ Trumbićeva obala 16 (099 417 7191 facebook.com/bokamorra)

Bokeria

The owners of Bokeria, the Bokavšek family, are at pains to explain that the reason for naming their establishment after the famous market in Barcelona was to bring a spirit of diversity to Split. Judging by the growing popularity of this place since opening in 2014, that's what



ARTIČOK

BOKAMORRA



Bokamorra pizzeria & haute couture cocktails is unique concept in Croatia, matching the finest in pizza with imaginative, freshly-made cocktails. The idea of opening this restaurant was born from a shortage of quality pizzerias and cocktail bars in Split and the wider area. The exquisitely

decorated interior of the restaurant rounds out the concept, with cool posters and paintings.

In Bokamorra, only the premium and quality ingredients are used. You can find only the best-sourced cheeses, pork and salami from all over Italy. Light and airy dough, aged for 48 hours, is

the backbone of Bokamorra's signature pizzas. Alongside, there are signature craft cocktails adapted to the seasons.

The backbar has more than 150 premium alcoholic drinks, the world's best bitters, and homemade syrups made by experienced bartenders and chefs in the kitchen.



Split restaurants

they've achieved. Bokeria is set in a building that once was a hardware store, and site of a few failed ventures before someone finally managed to fill this vast space. This is a big restaurant, compared to most others in Split, but it's far from cold – the interior design is supreme in its simplicity. The food is conceived along the same lines – and also takes its lead from the venue's full name of Bokeria Kitchen&Wine. What's on offer here is seasonal, with ingredients supplied from the local produce and fish markets. If there is a style in Bokeria's cuisine, than it's Mediterranean, something more than simply Dalmatian, from excellent vegetable concoctions to bruschetta to seafood, all the way up to steaks and beyond. The wine list is representative with the finest possible Croatian selection. Recently they instigated theme nights, and occasional smooth live music, mostly jazz.

→ Domaldova 8 (021 355 577, facebook.com/bokeriasplit)

Brasserie on 7

Brasserie on 7 is a take on the long-established contemporary Croatian eatery Zinfandel, sharing its ownership and philosophy. It also enjoys the most prime spot in the city, slap on the main seaside promenade of the Riva. No wonder, then, that Brasserie on 7 has become one of the leading lights of Split new gastronomic scene, with a tidy selection of redefined local and international dishes. The highlights include the chilled seafood platter, smoked salmon and octopus salad with fish and, for meat-eaters, the Black Angus burger with pancetta and Portobello mushrooms, and leg of lamb with rosemary and yogurt. Brasserie on 7 has also become known for its desserts, especially the all-the-suites-you-can-eat deal for 29kn. As for drinks, there's an impressive wine list, similar to that at Zinfandel, plus selected beers including micro-brewed San Servolo from Istria. As this is the Riva, naturally Brasserie on 7 is ideal for a coffee sipping on sunny afternoons with the world passing by.

→ Obala Hrvatskog narodnog preporoda 7 (021 278 233, brasserieon7.com)

Chops-Grill Steak & Seafood

One of the types of restaurant Split has always lacked was a good



Kitchen5

steakhouse – so Chops-Grill has fitted right in. Here grilled meats range from the Black Angus burger to several variations of rib-eye steak and on to a gigantic half-kilo T-bone. There's also quality Adriatic seafood such as monkfish and tuna. What also makes Chops-Grill different from the competition is its breakfast selection, obviously created for those who like to start a day with something substantial, all the way up to the calorie-packed American Cowboy variety. This is a pretty big restaurant by Split standards, with more than 50 tables, and has a nice position just off the main shopping street, Marmontova. Though surrounded by several bars, set on the corner of a small square, it's still quiet.

→ Kamila Tončića 6 (091 365 0000, chops-grill.com)



Diocletian's Wine House

Diocletian's Wine House

Until recently, this was one of those restaurants in Split with acceptable but not outstanding food, relying on its attractive palace location to bring in the tourists. After renovation, Diocletian now offers more artisanal and ambitious culinary offerings compared to the previous standard Dalmatian dishes. Most notably, the wine list has improved no end, becoming one of the most selective in town. It is also furnished with photos of old Split, showing different phases in the city's history, and old (or wannabe old) furniture, giving a sense of dining at home. Another new element is outside seating, in a street where allegedly the last legal emperor of the Western Roman Empire, Julius Nepos, was killed.

→ Julija Nepota 4 (099 564 7111, diocletianswinehouse.com)

Dvor

Situated just above the coastal path that works its way east from Bačvice Beach, Dvor is a uniquely calming place from which to admire the inviting silhouettes of Šolta and Brač across the water. Sit in the conservatory or venture out onto the terrace shaded by trees. Dvor functions perfectly both as café and restaurant – fish, steak and fowl are fired up on the open grill overlooking the lawn outside, and there's an excellent choice of Croatian wines by the glass.

→ Put Firula 14 (021 571 513, facebook.com/Dvor.Split)

Galerija Food

This 'continental restaurant and art gallery' is more restaurant and garden although the interior decor is tasteful and bright flowers in the outdoor space a more than welcome respite from the tourist hordes around the Palace. More than anything, the Galerija Food caters to vegetarians and those after gluten-free dishes, with plentiful use of peppers, pumpkins and locally grown produce.

→ Vuškovićevo 9 (098 939 5418, facebook.com/GalerijafoodSplit)

Kinoteka

Located in a colonnaded Renaissance courtyard lined with enormous potted plants, this is a rather memorable location in which to feast on what is for Split a rather unusual mixture of Asian dishes and local staples. The customary Croatian fish and meat choices are all here, joined by a handful of



Thai options (the very reasonable Pad Thai clocks in at 85Kn) and a decent choice of sushi. The florid vegetal murals and revolving ceiling fans in the bar area lend an exotic film-noir feel; indeed there's a cinematic theme throughout (the Kinoteka art cinema is right next door), with movie posters on the walls and old cinema seats at some of the tables. There's a good list of cocktails and shots if you want to make a night of it.

→ Ulica Majstora Jurja 8 (091 530 4260, www.facebook.com/kinotekafoodandbar, http://www.kinoteka.com.hr)

Kitchen5

Kitchen5 specialises in well presented, inventive Mediterranean-inspired cuisine. Mains include sesame-coated tuna with deep-fried sea anemone, and dry-aged beef in red-pepper sauce, prefaced by starters such as hot and cold octopus salad or truffle cappuccino. Desserts also merit investigation. It's also a handy spot for breakfast, choices featuring fried egg with pancetta and peppers or scrambled eggs with smoked salmon.

→ Kraj Sv. Marije 1 (021 553 377, kitchen5-split.com)

Konoba Hvaranin

See Split Top 20.

Konoba Marjan

This small, family-run, checked-tablecloth restaurant in the heart of the Varoĳ quarter is a long-standing local favourite. Pretty much everything in the Adriatic seafood repertoire is here – grilled fresh fish, seafood risottos, scampi, and squid. It's also the kind of place where you will find traditional Dalmatian fare like paštica, the trademark local stew made from beef marinated in wine and prunes.

→ Senjska 1 (098 934 6848, facebook.com/KonobaMarjan)

Ma:Toni

The former home to the Enoteca Terra restaurant and wine shop, and then the Tinita tavern, this stone-clad basement of a century-old building now houses a more recent venture. The couple Toni Arnerić and Tisija Prohić opened Ma:Toni late 2014, he the chef, she responsible for hospitality. Ma:Toni quickly became one of the biggest discoveries of the 2015 season.

Unlike those at many other venues with orthodox traditional Dalmatian cuisine, Ma:Toni's menu brings non-conventional creations, with dishes ranging from vegan, to fish and meat. These feature home-made pasta with beef cheeks, gnocchi with duck breast, bull's tail with mashed carrots and lamb-liver stew. Imaginative vegan-inspired dishes include palako pear: pear in black tea with vegan chocolate and ice-cream. With a location just metres from Bačvice beach, Ma:Toni has potential in spades, and its dungeon-like setting provides welcome refreshment on hot days, especially when combined with a soundtrack of jazz, funk and bossa nova.

→ Prilaz braće Kaliterna 6 (021 278 457, ma-toni.com)

Marshal

The new house venue of the four-star Marmont Hotel, the light, contemporary Marshal occupies a pretty corner of the historic centre, a short walk from the sea. It's more café than restaurant, with afternoon teas accompanied by a live pianist, but the platters (Iberian, cheese, Dalmatian smoked ham) and appetisers (pata negra, foie gras) make for a pleasant, relaxed dining experience à deux without the formality of white tablecloths and fawning service.

→ Marmont Hotel Heritage, Zadarska 13 (021 308 060, marmonthotel.com)

Mazzgoon food

Another small but mighty stronghold of Split's new gastronomy scene is owned by young spouses Sara and Toni Vrsalović. It's based right next to the Iron or Western Gate of the Diocletian's Palace, which was designated to be used by the Roman emperor's guard. Now, there is this contemporarily designed indoor space, beside a shady and pleasant terrace in the backyard of one of Split's medieval palaces. Mazzgoon is named after Dalmatian word for mule (mazga), known for its never-say-die persistence. Its cuisine is also a combination of traditional regional dishes and international influences. You'll find excellent Dalmatian brodetto, with home-made pasta from Korčula, but there is also a shrimp burger and street-food varieties. Mazzgoon is also a source of new happenings in town: its menu is also a monthly



Mazzgoon food

Split restaurants

magazine called Mazzgoon Times, with news about Split's culinary and clubbing scene. Nice touch.

→ Bajamontijeva 1 (098 987 7780, mazzgoonfood.com)

Nostromo

See Split Top 20.

Oštarija U Viđakovci

Between the port and Bačvice this homely konoba offers simple relaxation. Pictures of Split throughout its history hang beside old Hajduk ones. Tasty, well priced food keeps locals happy: peppers stuffed with mincemeat and rice, paštica stew and fish served in the Dalmatian way with blitva greens.

→ Prilaz braće Kaliterna 8 (021 489 106, ostarijavidjakovi.hr)

Perivoj

Opened in the summer of 2015, Perivoj quickly became a fashionable choice for eclectic

tasting menus, fine wines and, its signature speciality, cakes. The surroundings help things along nicely, a villa in a fine 19th-century garden a nice stroll from the historic centre.

→ Slavićeva 44 (021 787 585, facebook.com/Perivoj)

Restaurant Cardo

The Hotel Atrium's big ground-floor restaurant has been renamed after one of the main streets in the Diocletian's Palace but remains acknowledged as one of the city's prime culinary destinations. Here the traditional Dalmatian repertoire is jazzed up with an injection of modern European attitude. One speciality, though, is a selection of dishes prepared after recipes in the only cookbook that has come down from the Roman era, written by Marcus Gavius Apicius. One such is roast lamb 'haedum pasticum', boiled in prune sauce with white wine and sun-dried herbs, seasoned with Balsamic vinegar. The kitchen sticks to a handful of top-notch dishes rather than attempt to cook up every Adriatic favourite under the sun: fish mains are limited to fillets of sea bass served in inventive combinations of sauce and garnish – and there's usually at least one classic game, fowl

and steak selection on the menu, too. The risotto with spinach and asparagus is the perfect choice for a light and delicate lunch, while the house take on Dalmatia's favourite stew (paštica) delivers satisfyingly generous portions of succulent meat.

→ Domovinskog rata 49A (021 200 000, hotel-atrimum.hr)

Restoran Kadena

Occupying the same panoramic terrace as the former Bekan, the Kadena enjoys fabulous views over Zenta Marina towards the distant islands. Various bruschetta and creative desserts add to a classic Dalmatian menu already given an extra dimension by the imaginative introduction of additional ingredients and sauces. The creative force behind it all is Braco Sanjin, renowned in Croatia for his personal interpretation of Mediterranean seafood. The wine list requires a huge cellar. Ideal for a romantic rendezvous or business tete-à-tete.

→ Ivana pl. Zajca 4 (021 389 400, restorankadena.com)

Re di mare

Re di mare once was a place where boat owners at the Spinut sport marina could have a quick lunch. Since a change of ownership, it has become one of the leading

places in Split for seafood, mostly undiscovered by tourists due to its off-the-beaten-path location. This marina is not one in regular use by foreign sailors, but a place where locals keep their boats for tours around nearby islands. The restaurant terrace gives a beautiful view across the marina and the bay of Kaštela, all very different from the summer hubbub around the Diocletian's Palace. The main new element brought in by the new ownership is the selection of fish. They also own a chain of fish stores called Ribarnica Brač, who supply many local restaurants. And now it also supplies this one, presumably with some of the better varieties. Yet the food in Re di mare is rather simple, always reliable, and the grill chef is a master of his craft. The fish platter for two, with vegetables on the side, would be a wise choice here, the daily catch sure to be fresh. Prices are reasonable, in fact lower than in some of more promoted downtown restaurants of the same category.

→ Lučica 4 (095 725 5555, facebook.com/RedimareSplit)

Samurai

Opened by retired engineer Masahiro Okamoto in 2013, this is pretty much what central Dalmatia was crying out for: a sushi bar that's

welcoming, inexpensive and serious about producing quality sushi. Samurai's sushi makes the best use of local ingredients – you can have prfut sushi roll (6 pieces 75kn) as well as more traditional shrimp and salmon varieties. The other Japanese dishes on the menu – beef sukiyaki bowl, mixed tempura bowl and several noodle dishes – are ideal light-lunch material.

→ Bana Josipa Jelačića 1 (021 786 640, facebook.com/JapaneseRestaurantSamurai)

Šperun

This great little Dalmatian bistro is just behind Sv Frane church near the Riva. In a neat rustic interior, a table groans with Adriatic goodies – little fish, fresh vegetables, olive oils and so on. Prices here are completely reasonable – even for a blue fish mixed grill, grilled tuna fish with capers or oven-roasted sea bream with olives – and the portions generous. Marinated cheese and octopus salad feature among the many starters – or let the waiter recommend something from the cheap-and-quick daily specials.

→ Šperun 3 (021 346 999, facebook.com/Speruneatandrink)

Trattoria Tinel

The growing cluster of restaurants at the gateway to the Varoš quarter is slowly turning the area into one of Split's prime dining-out strips. Latest addition Tinel is another establishment that endeavours to deliver quality Dalmatian fare at affordable prices, with seafood risottos and pastas in the 50kn range, and the likes of scampi and lobster at the more expensive end of the menu. The restaurant features a refreshingly neat and colourful interior that doesn't go for retro Dalmatian clichés, and a cosy outdoor terrace at the back.

→ Tomića Stine 1 (021 355 197, trattoria-tinel.com)

Uje Oil Bar

See Split Top 20.

Zrno Soli

Set within the ACI Split Marina, the upscale Zrno Soli ('Grain of Salt') is a stylish fish restaurant with tables overlooking the bobbing yachts. Prices are steep but not exorbitant, considering the location and quality of the seafood on offer. Service and presentation both come up to the mark.

→ Uvala Baluni 8 (021 399 333, zrnosoli.hr)

BARS

Academia Ghetto Club

See Split Top 20.

Basket

You wouldn't normally come looking for cult cafés on this rather bland shop-lined thoroughfare, but the mellow, welcoming Basket is well worth the ten-minute trek from the Old Town. A cosy space with lots of warm brown wood offsetting the weird green wallpaper and jumble of framed pictures and posters, it's very much a quirky neighbourhood bar rather than a calculated commercial drinking space. The music is likely to be old-fashioned, vinyl-powered rock. There are craft beers on draft and in bottles; a simple bench outside on the pavement allows you to watch the world go by.

→ Ul. Domovinskog rata 42 (021 485 806)

Caffe Galerija

Located in the lobby of the Split Gallery of Fine Arts, this minimalist cafe is a popular local haunt for morning coffee, largely on account of its south facing, sun-trap outdoor terrace. Velebitsko beer in bottles and a good range of Dalmatian wines may persuade you to linger longer – perhaps the laid-back live music too.

→ Kralja Tomislava 15 (091 155 6911, galum.hr)

Charlie's Bar

Charlie's is one of the central points of wild summer pub crawl tours around Split, groups of youngsters wearing phosphorescent necklaces running around with only one goal in mind. This bar – in an atmospheric alley just outside the Palace – is owned by two Australians of Croatian origins. Furthermore, it's a part of the hospitality group that includes Zinfandel, Brasserie on 7 and a hostel opposite. This logistic makes this bar especially popular among backpackers, a Brit-Australian refuge in Split. Outside is a sign saying, 'Please respect our neighbours'...

→ Petra Kružića 5 (021 355 156, facebook.com/charliesbarsplit)

Clo Bar

Opened by the former manager of Hedonist in 2014, the Clo Bar is one of the most popular café-club venues to appear of late, with a

spacious, well designed interior that lends itself perfectly to a relaxing spot of coffee-sipping during the day, and more raucous DJ-fuelled fun at night. A good deal of thought and creativity has gone into the furnishings, with cucumber-cool grey and white surfaces setting off straight-backed seats in primary colours. It's a little way out of central Split on the main road to Solin, but is straightforward to get to in a taxi.

→ Domovinskog rata 104B (099 211 0203, facebook.com/clo.bar)

Fro

This is another Split venue that everyone knows but few could name. Most of the local crowd call it simply 'Isprid banke' ('In Front of the Bank'). Fro is derived from the fact that Sigmund Freud once stayed briefly in a strange-looking house with mixed Venitian-Maurish style where this café is based. That notwithstanding, it's probably the most central spot for coffee-sipping and socialising, enjoying the eternal sun on the Riva, a place to see and to be seen. There also seems to be a permanent photo session by prominent Split snapper and regular guest Valentino Bilič Prčić.

→ Obala Hrvatskog narodnog preporoda 11 (021 344 321, facebook.com/Froispridbanke)

Gaga

Just behind Narodni trg, Gaga is a permanently busy cocktail bar filling a tiny old square (check out the authentically retro barber's signs) with a young, party atmosphere. Cocktails, the only drink served from the counter set up outside, are dangerously cheap. Inside a standard interior, loud mainstream music keeps beer drinkers from too much conversation. Yes, that is a barber's shop from the 1960s next door, and yes, it's still in business.

→ Iza Lože 5 (021 348 257, facebook.com/cocktailbargaga)

Kavana-Restoran Bajamonti

Named after visionary 19th-century mayor Antonio Bajamonti, founder of the theatre that once stood on this spot, this suitably grand café at the top of the arcaded square is furnished with a selection of cosy sofas and smart upright chairs. So popular is it among the Saturday-morning caffeine-fuelled gossip brigade that people will gladly queue up for



Basket

a table. Good coffee and a choice of croissants, pastries and cakes are the things that keep locals coming in droves; there's also a first-floor restaurant serving local seafood and Mediterranean pastas and salads.

→ Trg Republike 1 (021 341 033, restoran-bajamonti.hr)

Kavana Ovčice

The seaside strip of east Split features clear seawater and numerous bars, clubs and restaurants. After recent renovation, Kavana Ovčice is one of the more pleasant options for this summer's beach time. It's based on a small pebbled beach between the two main ones of Bačvice and Firule. During the day, year-round, it's a great spot for slow coffee sipping. During the swimming season, it changes character, because you can enjoy your drinks with feet dipped in the sea. It also comes alive at night, with regular weekly live acts, mostly local rock and blues cover bands, who churn

out a few old favourites. There are also literary readings, events announced on posters around the venue, on its Facebook page and on Split's up-to-date events guide, infozona.hr/calendar.

→ Put Firula 4 (095 817 6171, kavanaovcice.com)

Leopold's Delicatessen Bar

Not really a delicatessen but definitely a craft beer mecca, with 5-6 beers on tap and a big choice of local and international bottles. Beers from Leopold's own Mandrill Nano brewery just across town are well worth a sip; brews from Split's other major craft brewery LAB Pivo are also well represented. The place is a bit grungy on the inside, but the outside terrace – made up of long bar-like tables and stools rather than twee garden furniture – has an atmosphere of its own on summer nights.

→ Poljana Tina Ujevića 3 (095 538 5129, facebook.com/Leopolds-Delicatessen-bar-479854395500467)



Zrno Soli

Libar Eat & Drink

This is a great find just off the Riva, by Sv Frane church, its first-floor terrace overlooking street life. There are also free Wi-fi, internet, real chips (12kn), tapas and snacks such as buffalo wings (35kn) and whitebait (30kn), plus live TV sports on two big screens on the terrace. Owner Kristijan Kuko keeps his prices low and his ambitions high. → Trg Franje Tuđmana 3 (098 971 8333, facebook.com/libarsplit)

Lvxor

The black sphinx sitting on the opposite wall of the Peristyl provides the inspiration behind this Egyptian-themed café, although the inner decoration, with its florid ceiling paintings and rich fabrics, leaves no style unturned. Observe the regular passage of people from the comfort of a relaxing sink-in chair. In summer, cushions are set out on the steps outside – providing what is arguably the most evocative coffee-sipping location in the entire Palace. In high season, the action moves into the square, with live music and spontaneous dancing. Luxor has recently extended its terrace, offering Dalmatian food on the other side of the square. → Kraj Sv. Ivana 11 (021 341 082, lvxor.hr)

Oš Kolač

The name mean something like “wanna cake?” and there’s no doubt you will after feasting your eyes on the display counter inside this cute four-table café. It’s the pride and joy of award-winning pastry cook and TV chef Tea Mamut; indeed almost everything on offer here comes with a strong element of authorial originality. Peaky cream cake Barba Čičak (20Kn) comes with hints of lavender and rosemary; while Šjor Limun (21Kn) melds lemon, white chocolate and roasted almonds into a sweet of heavenly proportions. Don’t leave without stocking up on some of Oš Kolač’s melt-in-the-mouth biscuits, notably the amaretto-flavoured Galetin and the peanut-and-chocolate Kukiriki. → Cirila i Metoda 4 (021 480 444, www.oskolac.hr)

Marvlvs Library Jazz Bar

This library/bar is in the heart of the Diocletian Palace, in a house where famous renaissance writer/philosopher Marko Marulić, the father of Croatian literature, is said to have been born. The building retains many of its 15th-century features, and provides an interesting place to sip a drink and

browse a vast collection of books to an easy listening soundtrack. Owner Agustin Sanchez (Argentine of Croatian descent) is a poet and artist himself, and has amassed a collection of Marulić works in various languages. Occasional literary evenings see both Croatian and international poetry read to a relaxed audience. This is also a rare non-smoking venue. → Papalićeva ulica 4 (098 963 7067, facebook.com/marvlvs)

Pun kufer

When they’re fed up, Germans say they have their noses full, Hungarians their snowshoes and Croats their suitcases. Pun kufer, ‘Full Suitcase’, ie ‘Fed Up’, far more fun than infuriating, is a new bar in the Palace opened by a Ukrainian couple, with a regular agenda of live music and literary readings. → Kralja Petra Krešimira IV 3 (021 355 368, facebook.com/punkuferbar)

ST Riva

Situated on the south side of the Diocletian palace, this bar has a very antique feel indoors, harking back to the ancient Split of the Roman era. The intimate balcony offers a jaw-dropping view over the Split Riva promenade, making

this a comfortable and intimate place to watch the never-ending stream of locals stroll by in a typically relaxed Dalmatian fashion. By night, the panorama view of the Riva and the port is magnificent.

→ Obala Hrvatskog narodnog preporoda 18 (021 343 796, facebook.com/-ST-RIVA-cocktail-bar-208357755873125)

To je to

To je to (“That’s it!”) is somehow not typical among the bars in Split. Since opening, it has tended to become more than just a place to drink and hang out with friends. Its owner, American Tim Bourcier, has turned it into a spot with karaoke, live music, open-mic and pub quiz nights. The place is tiny, with the smallest stage in the city, but this just adds to its casual atmosphere. It also serves as an excellent place to watch sport – feel free to ask them to change channels if need be. Not surprisingly, To je to boasts a healthy customer base from among Dalmatia’s many expats. → Vukovarska 49 (no number, facebook.com/tojetocaffe)

Teraca Vidilica

No terrace offers a better view than this, the whole of Split laid out before you – and islands beyond – from atop Marjan hill. The bar contains blown-up sepia postcards of pre-war Split scenes but most try to find an outside table, the children kept safe within the stone wall guarding the steep drop. To get here, climb the stepped streets of the evocative Varoš quarter. → Nazorov prilaz 1 (095 871 8792, facebook.com/Teraca-Vidilica-973159252723663)

Zinfandel

Just outside the Palace on one of the narrow medieval streets slanting away from Narodni trg, Zinfandels lays down a contemporary gauntlet to all the ancient stonework of Split’s Old Town, with matt-black interior, clever lighting and suave design touches. It’s primarily a wine bar (with a good selection of Dalmatian tipples by the glass) but you also get a menu of Mediterranean food (dainty portions rather than stomach fillers) and some really quite excellent platters for sharing – cold cuts, cheeses and marinated seafood. → Marka Marulića 2 (021 355 135, zinfandelfoodandwinebar.com)

NIGHTLIFE**Hemingway Bar Split**

Upmarket chain Hemingway took over from the long-established Tribu, down by the sea near the Poljud stadium. A large central bar is complemented by an equally large and chic interior, plus an outdoor area. It’s a huge space to fill, but Hemingway Bar Split packs in trendy young things every night – the brand, established in Zagreb, Opatija and elsewhere, is most known for its quality cocktails. It’s pricy by local standards – hence the fashionable crowd and regular agenda of domestic pop stars. → 8. Mediteranski igara 5 (099 211 9993, hemingway.hr/split)

Judino Drvo

The same team responsible for the excellent alternative club Minus3 came back in 2014 with an even bigger project, Judino Drvo (“The Judas Tree”), based in deserted railroad warehouses in the suburb of Kopilica. The interior is aesthetic in design with similar attention paid to important issues such as the sound system. Judino Drvo is hard to find for any outsider,

and there are no buses or public transport there. Concerts at here usually begin around 11pm, sometimes later, and the line-up includes some of the biggest names in Croatian rock’n’roll – and from the region of former Yugoslavia. Occasionally there are international acts, including DJs. Tickets are usually available at the downtown Golly&Bossy hostel. → Kopilica 24 (091 234 5494, judinodrvoclub.com)

Jungla Club

See Split Top 20.

Kocka

A legendary performance space in the basement of the Youth Cultural Centre hosting punk, electro, drum’n’bass or techno in gritty, graffiti-and-concrete surroundings. After few breaks in activity, Kocka was revived in late 2014, with a string of non-mainstream concerts of Croatian and international bands. Admission prices and drinks are cheap. Concerts are announced with posters and flyers around the city or by local listings resources such as infozona.hr/calendar. → Slobode 28 (021 540 537, facebook.com/klub.kocka)

Octopus Bowling

Not just regular bowling, but disco bowling. Yes, that’s right: disco. Harking back to old-school TV shows, this is a great idea for an unconventional night out with friends. Local DJ’s provide the soundtrack, whilst the bar offers a variety of drinks including their specialty žirafa, a metre-high beer. Very reasonably priced, it also offers party packages: two hours of bowling, a jumbo-sized pizza and a žirafa for €30. → Dobriliina 1 (091 101 0220, bowling-split.com)

Split Circus

Now permanently based at this larger location near Bačvice beach, Split Circus has more room to stage live acts and DJs than when it was just a summertime bar in the permanently mobbed bar strip of Dosud in the palace. It still offers the same serious array of rakija, far more than the usual plum or pear varieties – if you’ve never had blueberry, quince or strawberry grappa, this might be the place to try it. → Spinićeva 2B (Whatsapp 097 782 4327, facebook.com/splitcircus)

Treće Poluvrijeme (Kuka)

If it’s past the palace closing time of 1am and you’re still thirsty, head to this small bar behind the National Theatre near the old football ground – everyone else does. The ‘Third Half’ is handy for post-match relaxation – rock, pop and house sounds keep you out of mischief until dawn. Don’t be surprised to see burly types covered in mud meeting up for coffee during the day – Treće poluvrijeme is the main post-training meeting point for members of the next-door Split rugby club. → Zrinsko Frankopanska 17 (no number, facebook.com/Caffe-Disco-bar-TRE%C4%8E-POLUVRIJEME-iii-ti-ga-U-KUKE-147766660720)

Vanilla Bar Split

Adjoining the Hemingway in the sports complex, Vanilla is the kind of place that Croatians call ‘fancy’ – ie it sells drinks with umbrellas in them, and its crowd is over-dressed. As a pre-club bar, Vanilla does a job, although it’s just some wicker furniture overlooking a pool and clubby music. → Pools Poljud, Poljudsko šetaliste (099 831 3050, club-vanilla.hr)



Gaga cocktail bar



Kocka

SHOPPING

Art Studio Naranča

Pavo Majić founded Art Studio Naranča in 1983, before it moved to the bar-filled alley of Majstora Jurja in the palace in early 1990s. Naranča ('Orange') is a serious gallery specialising in graphic art. Besides selling works by some of Croatia's artists, Naranča also organises exhibitions, and Pavo is a founder of internationally recognised Graphic Biennale. However, there are souvenirs too, uniquely printed T-shirts, coffee mugs, even grocery bags, as well as jewellery designed by Maja Mijač Majić. There are art books too. If you can carry it home, maybe even one of the artworks here might also catch your eye.

→ Majstora Jurja 5 (021 344 118, studionaranca.com)

Break Time

Opened in 2015 by Romanian couple Mirela Rus and Ionut Copoiu, this small store near the fish market stocks hand-made bracelets created from coloured strips of rope, as well as sundry artisanal souvenirs with a maritime theme.

→ Trogirska 8 (091 59 53 895, nautical-bracelets.com)

City Center One

This is the biggest shopping mall in Dalmatia, with more than 100 stores, including H&M, Adidas, Nike and Lacoste, as well as the Kid's Jungle children's play area, a seven-hall Cineplexx and a Go-Kart Arena.

→ Vukovarska 207 (021 510 130, citycenterone.hr/split)

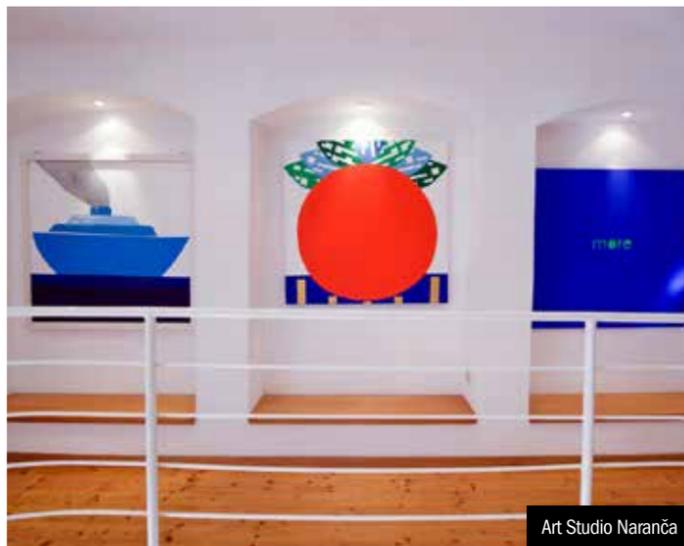
Joker Centre

The first big mall to open in Split, the Joker Centre offers attractions such as a Cinestar cinema multiplex (there's a statue of Orson Welles outside the mall), an outdoor pool, a top-floor restaurant and sky bar. There are also 50 outlets of main global and Croatian chains. Parking is free.

→ Put Brodarice 6 (021 396 910, <https://www.joker.hr/eng>)

Kruščić

Old-Town bakery just behind the fish market producing a range of artisan breads, using flour from a local watermill. They also do truly delicious snacks, including pizza



Art Studio Naranča

slices, olive-flavoured buns and sandwiches. Be sure to grab a slice of their original take on the Viška pogača (a traditional anchovy-and-tomato pie from the island of Vis), here reinvented as a tangy, quesadilla-like flat-bread squelch. Pop in on Fridays for a loaf of Dioklecijan, a special weekend bread made from wholemeal flour and flavoured with goats' cheese and honey.

→ Obrov 6 (099 261 2345, www.facebook.com/Kruscic.Split)

La Regina del Formaggio

Right opposite the pizzeria Galija is this small venue, something between a delicatessen and exclusive wine and cheese spot, opened in the summer of 2014. Its owner is former handball player Dijana Jelaska, who had a significant career in Italy. There she was imbued with a love of Italian food and wines – for her, La Regina is a dream come true. Pretty much all its products – cheeses, hams, wines, salamis, pastas – come from Italy, the major influence in international trends in Split's gastronomic scene. There are also selected smoked hams and cheeses from inland Dalmatia, well worth trying and, of course, the finest Croatian wines. What makes La Regina different is that almost all products are available for tasting before purchase, so it's not unusual to see people sitting in front of it, at the barrels that serve as tables, sipping a glass of wine and nibbling at some cheese and ham.

→ Bana Josipa Jelačića 21 (091 558 4012, [facebook.com/la.regina.del.formaggio](http://www.facebook.com/la.regina.del.formaggio))

LUKA Ice Cream & Cakes

Split has many ice-cream parlours, Luke Ice Cream & Cakes, opened in 2014, has turned the whole scene

upside down. Before, most venues offered the routine assortment of flavours, the chocolates, vanillas and straciatellas of this world. So when Polish expat Luka Klimczak unveiled something completely new, right behind the National Theatre, it became popular almost overnight. Apart from this near instant success, Luka makes nonsense of the usual prejudices that only Italians can make good gelato. Its selection of flavours is fairly modest, but it changes on a daily basis, so you never know what you will find among dozen or so choices in the fridge. These might be apple pie, panacotta raspberry, blueberry or cheesecake, they might be mojito, rosemary vanilla, fig or yogurt with pear. And the apple pie ice-cream tastes like an apple pie. The owners guarantee that all ingredients are natural and fresh – and the same goes for the cakes too. Prices are competitive, and at seven kunas a scoop, and you can easily go double.

→ Svačićeva 2 (091 908 0678, [facebook.com/LukalceCream](http://www.facebook.com/LukalceCream))

Mali dućan Matejuška

In the last few years, one of the most popular spots in summer, especially for younger locals, is Matejuška, the old fishermen's cove near the Riva. Recently joined by tourists, they sitting around and sip beers on the seafront. These drinks come from Mali dućan ('Little Shop'), something more than just a corner shop. This is the best-supplied store in town for beer. Here there are more 150 varieties from all over the world, with a reasonable pricing policy, too.

→ Trumbićeva obala 7 (021 273 695, [facebook.com/maliducanmatejuska](http://www.facebook.com/maliducanmatejuska))

Oš Kolač

The name mean something like "wanna cake?" and there's no doubt you will after feasting your eyes on the display counter inside this cute four-table café. It's the pride and joy of award-winning pastry cook and TV chef Tea Mamut; indeed almost everything on offer here comes with a strong element of authorial originality. Peaky cream cake Barba Čičak (20Kn) comes with hints of lavender and rosemary; while Šjor Limun (21Kn) melds lemon, white chocolate and roasted almonds into a sweet of heavenly proportions. Don't leave without stocking up on some of Oš Kolač's melt-in-the-mouth biscuits, notably the amaretto-flavoured Galetin and the peanut-and-chocolate Kukiriki. Čirila i Metoda 4 (021 480 444, www.oskolac.hr)

Ribarnica

Tucked in beside the Diocletian's Palace halfway up the pedestrianised commercial thoroughfare of Marmontova, the Ribarnica, or Fish Market, is a local landmark. There's both an outdoor section (comprising a few stalls) and an indoor one, and around bars open from early in the day. Celebrated seafood restaurant Nofromo could not be better located to take advantage of the fresh produce on offer.

→ Obrov 5

Ribarnica Brač

Mention ribarnica ('fish market') in Split, and the first association is with the old one in the city centre. Recently, there is another venue is being mentioned – and visited. It's the Ribarnica Brač and its main store is close to the Poljud stadium. There are four more in Split and around, and the same people run the excellent restaurant Re di mare, and supply most of Split with fish and other seafood. Available at Ribarnica Brač is the fresh, daily catch, ideal for anyone who wants to test their cooking skills when on holidays. All the fish bought here is cleaned at the spot. Under the same roof is a small deli with salads and risottos, seafood pasta, stews, fish sandwiches and just plain fried fish.

→ 8. Mediteranski igara 9 (021 380 668, [facebook.com/RibarnicaPeskarija](http://www.facebook.com/RibarnicaPeskarija))

Split Market

See Split Top 20.

HOTELS

101 Dalmatinac Design Hostel

Taking its decorative cues after both the region and the dog, Dalmatinac has exactly 101 beds, each one of them is named after different island, with basic facts about it on the wall by the bed. Each room has a shower and toilet, and there are doubles available too. Beds in dorms have adjacent lockers. There are also public spaces with a games room and a TV lounge. There's also free Wi-Fi everywhere, 24/7 reception, washing machines, restaurant and bar. The hostel is pretty far from the city centre, but well connected by the public transport – one of six buses can take you downtown in about 15 minutes, the stop only 50 metres from the hostel. Even if you decide to walk, it's 30 minutes maximum. For visitors to Ultra Europe, the Poljud is even closer and easy to find from the hostel. → 114. Brigade 10, Ravne Njive (021 585 270, 101dalmatian.com)

Atrium Hotel

Located a brisk 20-minute walk north of the Old Town, the sleek five-star Atrium is set almost next door to the not-as-funny-as-it-sounds Joker Centre shopping mall. Behind a dark-glass exterior (look out for the remains of a Roman aqueduct in the lobby gallery), a seven-floor interior contains 124 large rooms and four suites, all done out very elegantly in wood and marble. It's a great place to relax and decompress, with muted and soothing colours on the walls, a few good spots for a quiet drink, and staff who are helpful without straying into over-attentiveness. The spa centre offers superior saunas (infra-red and Finnish), a pool, jacuzzi and gym, while the ground-floor restaurant is in the gourmet class.

→ Domovinskog rata 49A (021 200 000, hotel-atrium.hr)

Camping Split

In the last few years Split has seen plenty of hostels open, and even more apartments, but there is only one camping site, recently revamped and reopened in an eastern suburb of Stobreč, on the D8 road from Split to Dubrovnik. In 2014, it was already getting a



101 Dalmatinac Design Hostel

name among campers, either those who sleep in tents or those who prefer caravans and bungalows, or have their own campers. The site is excellently located by the sea, in a small forest with its own pebbled beach, and the long sand beach of Stobreč is only metres away. All pitches are neat and well marked, most of them in shade. There is also a playground for kids and a driving range for golf, owned by the club across the road. Other sports include snorkelling, windsurfing and waterskiing. The camp has its own pizzeria and a restaurant, there's Wi-Fi and computers with internet connections. → Svetog Lovre 6, Stobreč (021 325 426, campingsplit.com)

Cornaro Hotel

See Split Top 20.



Cornaro Hotel

Dioklecijan Hotel & Residence

A former luxurious retirement home, the Dioklecijan Hotel & Residence is dedicated to health tourism and all kinds of spa treatments. An outdoor swimming pool sits on top of the hotel offering a truly spectacular view of Split, including Marjan and the harbour. Under the roof, all under it, in fact, are hot tubs, saunas, jacuzzis... as well as a film screening room, a library and a restaurant. Rooms are big and comfortable, each with a balcony, most with sea views. → Kranjčevićeva 45 (021 585 100, hotel-dioklecijan.com)

Goli & Bosi Design Hostel

Located in a thoroughly renovated historic building just outside the palace, this bold exercise in

contemporary Croatian design muscled its way into the media limelight almost immediately upon opening in August 2010. The work of designer Damir Gamulin Gamba and Studio Up architects Lea Pelivan and Toma Plejić, Goli & Bosi's minimalist rooms are spread across several floors, including some nifty split-level doubles and family rooms as well as larger dorms. Out in the corridors, floors are decorated with important dates from Split history and local-dialect references to famous Dalmatians. The building was used as a shopping mall from 2000 to 2010, which helps to explain the elevators and sweeping staircases that link the floors. There's an airy café-bar and restaurant in the open-plan reception area-cum-common room, and an area where films are screened on one of the upper floors. Slick, shiny, clean and good value – although it's very, very yellow.

→ Morpurgova poljana 2 (021 510 999, gollybossy.com)

Hotel Luxe

Opened in 2010, this design-oriented four-star is both good to look at and fun to stay in. Local architects Vjeko Ivanišević and Lea Aviani were responsible for the overall design, a sleek slab of grey built on the site of a former factory. The interior is anything

Split hotels

but industrial: walls and surfaces are sparkingly white, carpets and other fabrics feature strong blues and purples. The rooms themselves all face south towards Split's harbour – ones on the lower floors won't have much of a view, but those higher up provide an exciting sense of Split's passenger-port bustle. 'Superior' doubles are slightly more spacious than the regular rooms and also boast small balconies. With only 30 rooms, the Luxe preserves an intimate boutique feel, and the location adjacent to both port and palace couldn't be bettered. There's a spa centre in the basement with gym, sauna, and an atmospherically domed lounge with a jacuzzi pool. There is free Wi-Fi throughout, and parking is available in a nearby side street.

→ Kralja Zvonimira 6 (021 314 444, hotelluxesplit.com)

Hotel More

This friendly little three-star out near the seafront at Znjan is a pleasant choice if you just want some beach time with occasional forays into town. All eight rooms have a sea view, half with a verdant terrace to boot, and there's a suite

available too. Check the website for special deals for three, five and seven-day stays. There are also half-board rates.

→ Setalište Pape Ivana Pavla II 27, Znjan (021 462 112, hotelmore.hr)

Hotel Park

See Split Top 20.

Hotel Peristil

This modern hotel in the palace now has a terrace restaurant, the Tifani, overlooking the Peristil. It's a three-star, with nine simple, comfortable doubles and three singles, all reasonable for the price and location. The rooms are artfully decorated with wooden floors and taffeta curtains, and contain flat-screen TVs.

→ Poljana kraljice Jelene 5 (021 329 070, hotelperistil.com)

Hotel President

Behind the National Theatre, this four-star is one of Split's best-kept secrets. Superbly finished in period style, the hotel has 63 rooms of varying size and ten suites, all with jacuzzis and the latest mod cons. It's classy, spacious and centrally located.

→ Starčevićeva 1 (021 305 222, hotelpresident.hr)

Hotel President Solin

Under the same ownership as its namesake in central Split, this new hotel offers stylish luxury 6km away in the suburb of Solin, near the ruined Roman city of Salona. The 96 rooms and apartments cater for all guest combinations and have all the latest comforts and technology. For relaxation there are three pools (mineral-, sea- and fresh-water), fitness, beauty and massage centres and plenty more besides.

→ Ulica Kralja Petra Krešimira IV 11, Solin (021 685 300, hotelpresident.hr)

Hotel Split

When it comes to accommodation, the area of east Split, towards Makarska and Dubrovnik, is known mostly for apartment rentals, and the five-star Le Méridien Lav. In the last few years, new hotels have opened up here showing that this seaside stretch has potential. Hotel Split is one of them. This four-star venue between Stobreč and Le Méridien Lav was set up by the Tomić family, and that's one of its main qualities – it is much more carefully run than the chain resort hotels. It is set just above a nice pebbled beach. From the street, you couldn't

tell that this is a seven-storey building, because half the floors are almost invisible from that side. From the sea, the hotel looks completely different. All rooms have a sea view, and most of them are identical, except in one detail: the walls in each are painted a different colour, in Mediterranean hues of sage, lavender, and so on. There are also few rooms designed to make you feel as if you're sleeping on a yacht. There are all the usual amenities, including a spa, a restaurant with a sea-facing terrace and a bar.

→ Strožanačka 20 (021 420 420, hotel-split.hr)

Hotel Vestibul Palace

Set in a modest little building adjoining the open-roofed vestibule in the palace, this friendly seven-room boutique hotel is certainly swish. Rooms have nice decorative touches, such as natural brick, but the building simply isn't big enough to allow for many additional facilities. There is a restaurant, the Diocles, and tables outside on the square beside the Ethnography Museum. Extra accommodation is available at the Villa Dobrić annexe just a few steps away to the west, a stone medieval building comprising two



Radisson Blue Resort & Spa

guestrooms on the first floor, with two junior suites sit above. There are good weekend deals available if you book off-season.

→ Iza Vestibula 4 (021 329 329, vestibulpalace.com)

Judita Palace

Right on Split's main square, this luxurious four-star hotel occupies a Renaissance palace once occupied by the noble Pavlović family. Four guestrooms fill the four floors, all soundproofed windows, parquet floors and Swarovski crystal. One deluxe double also features a large balcony. The hotel takes its name from the Biblical character who inspired a poem by Marko Marulić, the father of Croatian letters, who lived and died nearby.

→ Narodni trg 4 (021 420 220, juditapalace.com)

Kaštel

Little-known three-star in the palace, at the end of a narrow alleyway just off Voćni trg. Built in 1896 as a private home, Kaštel was converted into a hotel in 2005, and refurbished in 2008. Its ten rooms are simple, clean and the best value for small groups of palace-bound partygoers. Another pleasant surprise is that some overlook the Riva seafront – surprising, considering the main building is in a tiny cul-de-sac.

→ Mihovilova širina 5 (021 343 912, kastelsplit.com)

Le Méridien Lav

Set 11 km away at Podstrana, Le Méridien is Split's top-of-the-range five-star. You can take a dip in the infinity pool with a view along the sun-drenched coast towards Split, luxuriate in the wine or truffle therapies of the top-notch Diocletian spa, or gaze longingly at the superyachts in the marina from the large terrace. The rooms are spacious and stylish, service standards are high, as you would expect, and there are conference facilities – yet the

atmosphere is pleasantly relaxed. The main restaurant, Spalatum Galerija, does superb sea bass and steak. To follow, there's a fab, sunken champagne bar, as well as an old-style pivnica pub left deliberately unmodernised; a casino and nightclub provide more mischievous entertainment if you feel like staying up until the early hours. There are shuttle services into town several times a day and regular water taxis from the airport. It also has its own private pebble beach.

→ Grijevačka 2A, Podstrana (021 500 500, lemeridienlavsplit.com)

Marmont Hotel

Opened in 2009, this swish city-centre four-star is close to the palace and comprises 21 rooms, a presidential suite and a roof terrace – all in a tastefully refurbished historical house. Original exposed stone, wooden floors and minimalist style characterise the common areas – classy walnut furniture and free WiFi feature in the guestrooms. A restaurant, the Marshal, has been opened on the ground floor, named in honour of Marshal Marmont, the governor of Dalmatia in Napoleon's day.

→ Zadarska 13 (021 308 060, marmonthotel.com)

Piazza Heritage Hotel

The Piazza Heritage Hotel is a small boutique hotel set on a central city square. Both exterior and interior are like nothing you'll see in Split. In a middle of this Mediterranean

city, this Art Nouveau building erected in 1906 looks like it should be in Vienna. The suites themselves are on the first floor, seven rooms of four-star luxury decorated like a stylish salon from the 18th century. The rooms are big and comfortable, with all amenities required for a four-star, and beyond. As you're in the hub of the city, everything and everyone passes by the hotel windows, providing endless opportunities for people-watching.

→ Kraj Sv. Marije 1 (021 553 377, piazza-heritagehotel.com)

Radisson Blu Hotel

Reopened after complete refurbishment in 2010, the luxurious new Radisson Blu Split (formerly the Hotel Split) has 246 stylish modern rooms and suites, six with disabled access, as well as two restaurants, indoor and outdoor swimming pools, sauna and steam bath, gym and spa.

→ Put Trstenika 19 (021 030 030, radissonblu.com)

The View Luxury Rooms

It's not called the view for nothing. Occupying the eighth floor of the largest building in Split, a towering office block on Kralja Zvonimira. The five rooms – two with city vistas, two with sea vistas, one with a side view of the Adriatic – are quite modest but comfortable and surprisingly affordable. Unfortunately, the owners seem to have had no budget left for an English translator – as their website says, 'City, Sea & Mountains, all on your hand'.

→ Kralja Zvonimira 14 (021 277 715, theviewluxuryrooms.com)

Villa Varoš

Tucked away in the Varoš neighbourhood near the palace, this is one of the best options for price and comfort. Owned by Joanne, a Croat from New York, the lovely old stone house harbours new, simply furnished but chic rooms, with satellite TV, air-con and WiFi. There are three apartments with spacious living areas, including one top-floor apartment with terrace. Breakfast is available in a restaurant round the corner for a modest extra fee, and alley parking is available for €10/day.

→ Miljenka Smoje 1 (099 215 9538, villaros.hr)

Split hotels



Hotel Luxe



Hotel Split

Brač Top 20

Croatia's most iconic beach, the highest peak on the islands and a sculptor extraordinaire.

1 Devour local lamb

For divine lamb with all the trimmings, reared, grown and produced around this traditional tavern in bucolic surroundings, head for Konoba Tomić north-east of Bol. By the village of Gornji Humac this wine cellar and family lodging has been in place for 500 years, its conversion to a quality rustic restaurant meaning that all the taxi drivers in Bol know it. Phone ahead to order a peka meal, most notably octopus, slow-cooked in the traditional Dalmatian way.
→ Gornji Humac 36 (091 225 1199, <http://konobatomic.com>)

2 Live sustainable luxury at Dol Hills

An estate measuring 46,000 square metres of secluded greenery, housing a luxury resort

with a pool, jacuzzi, sauna, private bar and below ground cinema, Dol Hills is a perfectly isolated and thoroughly modern resort. Health, relaxation, plus excellent services and facilities are their selling points and the complex aims to provide a sustainable and carbon neutral experience without any drop in quality. The perfect place for worry-free family holidays or for couples wanting a fulfilling, rejuvenating and peaceful holiday.
→ Dol 140, Postira (dolhillsestate.com) +385 (0) 91 537 0282

3 Hit Croatia's most famous beach

By Bol on the south coast of the island, Zlatni rat is the reason many visit Brač. An iconic V-shaped beach juts out into the water, the tides and currents causing the fine shingle to change shape



Zlatni rat



Villa Giardino

ever so slightly as the months go by. Backed by fragrant pines, Zlatni rat ('Golden Cape') attracts windsurfers, who take advantage of the wind patterns, the light morning Lev-anat and the afternoon Mistral.

4 Sample superb seafood at Ribarska Kućica

If you're going to splash out on Brač, propose, even, this is probably the place to do it, on one of the terraces of a lovely old stone house facing a perfect horizon of sea and sky. Set on a rocky walkway – be careful on the way back if you've laid waste to the house white – it takes full advantage of the setting by providing

top-notch fish and seafood. If money no object, hang the expense and order lobster. The short stroll from Bol should build up an appetite.

→ Šetalište Anđelka Rabadana 2d (095 902 9844, [facebook.com/Restaurant-Ribarska-kucica-Bol-otok-Brač-596488784055583](https://www.facebook.com/Restaurant-Ribarska-kucica-Bol-otok-Brač-596488784055583))

5 Lounge at Varadero

From relaxing coffees in the morning to lively cocktails late at night, Varadero provides Brač with a tiki-style hangout and party destination in one. Close to Bol waterfront, Varadero schedules a regular series of appearances by well known Croatian DJs over the course of the summer, but its main raison d'être is to bring

like-minded holidaymakers together for affordable drinking and dancing.

→ Frane Radića 1 (095 905 4203, [facebook.com/Varadero.Bol](https://www.facebook.com/Varadero.Bol))

6 Sleep in the Emperor's bedroom

This charming old villa is set back a couple of hundred metres from the Bol waterfront at Novi put 2. But, for all of the tranquillity and grandeur on offer here, it could be a couple of hundred kilometres away and two centuries ago. Here, Habsburg Emperor Franz Josef famously slept in 1875, snoring away in one of the 14 rooms, taking in the views while enjoying breakfast on the front terrace or shying away from the crowds in the welcomingly secluded garden.

→ Novi put 2, Bol (021 635 900, villagiardinobol.com)



Ribarska Kućica

7 Sample traditional island dishes

Few places around Bol can claim a location like Taverna Riva's, right on the seaside promenade, its terrace overlooking the port and across to Hvar. The food's great too, the cuisine based on local tradition but with lesser-found dishes such as lobster with gnocchi and, a real Brač speciality, vitalac, the offal of a young lamb wrapped in the intestines of a younger one. Old stone house surrounds augment the experience. Frane Radića 5 (021 635 236, tavernariva-bol.com)

8 Walk in the footsteps of Ivan Rendić

The most famous sculptor from an island famed for the quality of its stone, Ivan Rendić spent his earliest and his last years in Supetar, failing to gain support for his ambitious cultural initiatives. Supetar has since reevaluated its prodigal son and established a themed cultural walk, 'One Day with Rendić'. Leading from the main beach, another Rendić proposal, the



Waterman Svpetrvs Resort

trail takes in his family home and gallery, and the city cemetery. A map is distributed from the tourist office by the port.

→ Ul. Kipara Ivana Rendića 1 (021 630 551, supetar.hr)

9 Get active at Waterman Svpetrvs Resort

Five pools, sports courts, a spa, children's clubs and several restaurants comprise Waterman Svpetrvs Resort, overlooking Banj public beach in Supetar. Open from May through to October, with half-board rates in the shoulder seasons

a steal, this extensive complex is set apart from the nearby tranquil bustle of the island's main harbour. The Beach BBQ and Roof Top Bar keep you happily fed and watered.

→ Put Vela Luke 4 (021 640 253 watermanresorts.com)

10 Dine romantically at Palute

With its spacious terrace jutting out in the sea beside Supetar port, Palute is blessed with a winning romantic setting, in full warm view of a slow, slow sunset. The place could charge a fortune

for its fresh fish platters, quality meat dishes and its stand-out seafood spaghetti. It chooses not to. Instead, you and your starry-eyed dining companion can clink glasses of equally affordable house wine while friendly staff come and go, and boats glide by.

→ Porat 4 (021 631 730, facebook.com/restaurantpalute)

11 Enjoy classical opulence at Palaca Dešković

This cultural monument, now a stylish four-star, 13-room hotel, has been in the same family since its construction in 1467. On the outside, the Renaissance feel has held pretty steady. Within, thanks to dedicated owner, Ružica, each spacious room is unique. Antique furniture is complemented by the contemporary comforts of heated bathroom floors and WiFi. Adorning the walls are paintings by Ružica herself. The restaurant is equally four-star, while the leafy, walled garden is perfect for breakfast.

→ Put Sv. Jerolima (021 778 247 palaca-deskovic.com)

12 Enjoy traditional dining at Konoba Kopacina

In Donji Humac just south of Supetar and well away from the tourist bustle, this traditional-looking tavern dates back to 2000 though the Jugović family has some four decades of experience in hospitality. This encompasses considerable expertise in preparing lamb, the speciality here, offered spit-roasted, boiled and, the best option, as the centrepiece of a slow-roasted peka dish. Order in advance and take your time over it – choose a table on the shaded terrace and you can bask in the view while you dine.

→ Donji Humac 7 (021 647 707 konoba-kopacina.com)

13 See the work of Italian master Tintoretto

Located on the other side of Bol from Zlatni rat, along šetalište Anđelka Rabadana, this medieval monastery somehow managed to wind up with a Tintoretto for an alter painting. How the 450 year old Madonna with Child came to rest at this tranquil spot on a headland looking out to Hvar isn't clear – it is thought that Montenegrin painter Tripo Kokolja may have brought it over from his time in Venice before working on the ceiling here. A collection of coins from Ancient Greece provides further reason to visit.

→ Anđelka Rabadana 4 (021 778 000, dominikanci.hr/index.php/samostani/bol)

14 Challenge yourself with a climb

The sight of the pale stone Pustinja Blaca monastery on the south side of the island is made all the more spectacular against its backdrop, a vertical face of rock. Similar formations occur all over Brač, such as at Ložišća, and they make for excellent climbing. You can receive expert and accompanied guidance and there are routes to suit any ability or ambition. For a more leisurely climb, coupled with a panoramic view, head out to Vidova gora. A steady trek heads up to a peak of 778 metres (2,552 feet), the views opening up along the way. At the top, a summer-only bar offers beers and a handy picnic table.

15 Swim where locals swim

An easy walk around the bay from the waterfront cafés by Supetar harbour, this city beach is a popular feature, one first planned out by influential local sculptor Ivan Rendić. Backdropped by the Waterman Svpetrvs Resort, this public facility fills with rented sunloungers and umbrellas but still feels spacious enough, even in high season. Toddlers paddle in the shallows, swimmers gaze at the regular passing of the Split ferry way in the distance. Showers provided and there's a cheapish bar/restaurant close by.

16 Discover island history at the Museum of Brač

Rural implements hardly provide reason to trek the short distance from Supetar to Škrip and poke around the Museum of Brač there – but the legend that the daughter of Roman emperor Diocletian, of Split palace fame, is buried here usually brings a steady stream of visitors. As the palace was made of stone from these parts, there would have been plenty of trade between island and mainland – and Škrip is not only older than Split, it's the oldest settlement on Brač. The mausoleum itself lies beneath the Radojković Tower here – safely tucked away for the legend to last for another few centuries.

→ Trg sv. Petra 1 (021 637 092, czk-brac.hr)

17 Enjoy family-free luxury at Bračka Perla

Overlooking the Adriatic at the edge of town before Supetar runs out of road, Bračka Perla offers a touch of luxury to those seeking away-from-it-all relaxation. It's an adult-only hotel, so the select number of guests in the eight individually decorated suites and three rooms get first dibs on the open-air pool and jacuzzi. Massage treatments are also on offer, and the restaurant makes best use of the olive oils and wines produced nearby by the same family. Boat transfers offered from Split.

→ Put Vele Luke 53 (021 755 530, brackaperla.com)

18 Try Dalmatian food with a twist

Sutivan was once a thriving wine-growing village, devastated by diseased vineyards and depopulated. Now this authentic Dalmatian community, set at the nearest spot on Brač to Split, is being revived – and Konoba Bokuncin by the old port is part of this revival. Here traditional components to the standard Adriatic dining experience are given a modern twist. Everything feels fresh, not least the bread, pastas and pastries, all made on-site. Service encourages repeat custom.

→ Obala kralja Tomislava 26 (098 950 7171, www.facebook.com/bokuncin1)

19 Practice solitude at Blaca Monastery

In this secluded location of Nerežišća, halfway between Milna and Murvica, in the south-west corner of Brač island, Blaca Monastery was a place of dutiful contemplation for centuries. From 1551, monks found sanctuary here, away from the Turks and the rest of civilization. The last resident was a notable one, Father Niko Miličević, who died in 1963. Not only did he leave behind a library said to contain 10,000 books but his unique observatory, where he observed the heavens with the third most powerful telescope in Croatia.

20 Taste the best island wines at Stina

Down at the Bol seafront, Jako Andabak has created the finest winery on Brač, naming it after the stone (stina) for which the island is best known. Here you'll find an outlet for sampling and purchasing the wines grown by Andabak – white Vugava and Pošip, among others – at Grabica. Having top Croatian Croatian designers Bruketa & Žinić to create their award-winning labels was a masterstroke, as Stina is making waves well beyond the modest demands of Brač itself.

→ Bračka cesta 13 (021 306 220, stina-vino.hr)



Postira



Blaca Medieval Glagolitic Hermitage

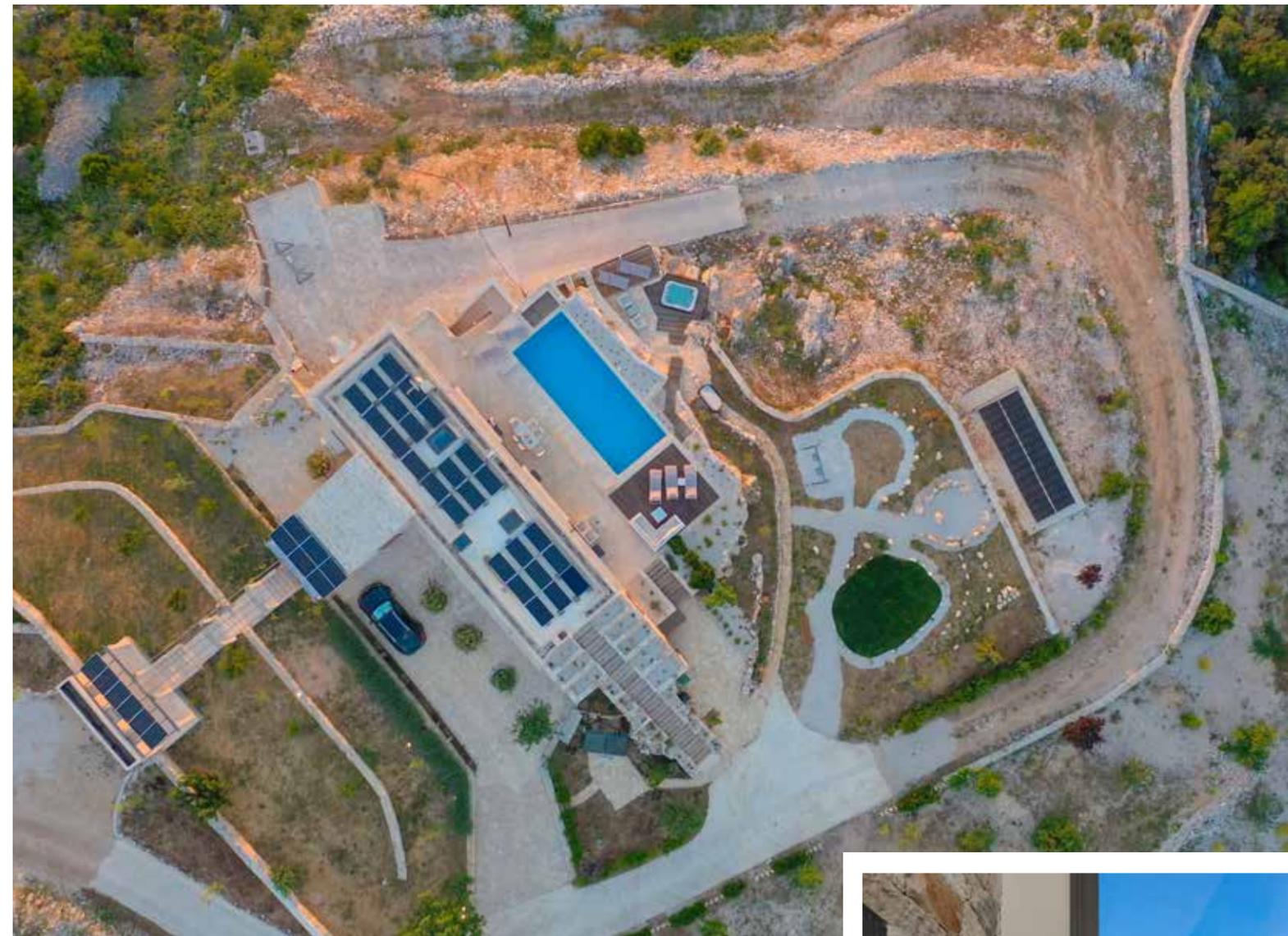
Off-grid luxury island retreat

What began as a spark of an idea by energy trader Mirko Ivanda, a graduate of Wake Forest University, has since developed into an ambitious, exciting and eco-friendly tourism project on Brač, the closest island to the main Dalmatian port of Split.



THE CONCEPT behind the Dol Hills estate is to combine a luxurious island retreat, secluded yet connected, with a self-sustaining estate striving towards carbon neutrality.

Backed by solar panels and batteries, with its own wastewater treatment, this year-round pioneering development shows how to live in harmony with nature without having to sacrifice comfort or luxury.



To this end, finding a site 46,000 square metres in size near Dol, inland from Postira and Lovrečina Bay on the north coast, Mirko and his crew followed old paths used by shepherds to lay down and renew some 16km of road, 3km of cables and 4km of stone walls. Reviving the island's traditional crafts is another vital aspect to this wide-reaching development.

But first, the property itself. Twenty minutes from Brač airport yet completely secluded, the Dol Hills estate suits the health-conscious couple looking for a getaway, the active family and any fun-seeking group of friends looking for that special Adriatic island vibe.

Set on the 'green lung' of Brač, the estate at its lowest point is at 380 metres above sea level and at its peak at 467 with the villa at 437 metres, spread over two levels, with a pool, jacuzzi, sauna, private bar, laundry room and below ground cinema. The main bedroom connects by a secret staircase to the screening room. At ground level, a covered terrace is complemented by three guest rooms.

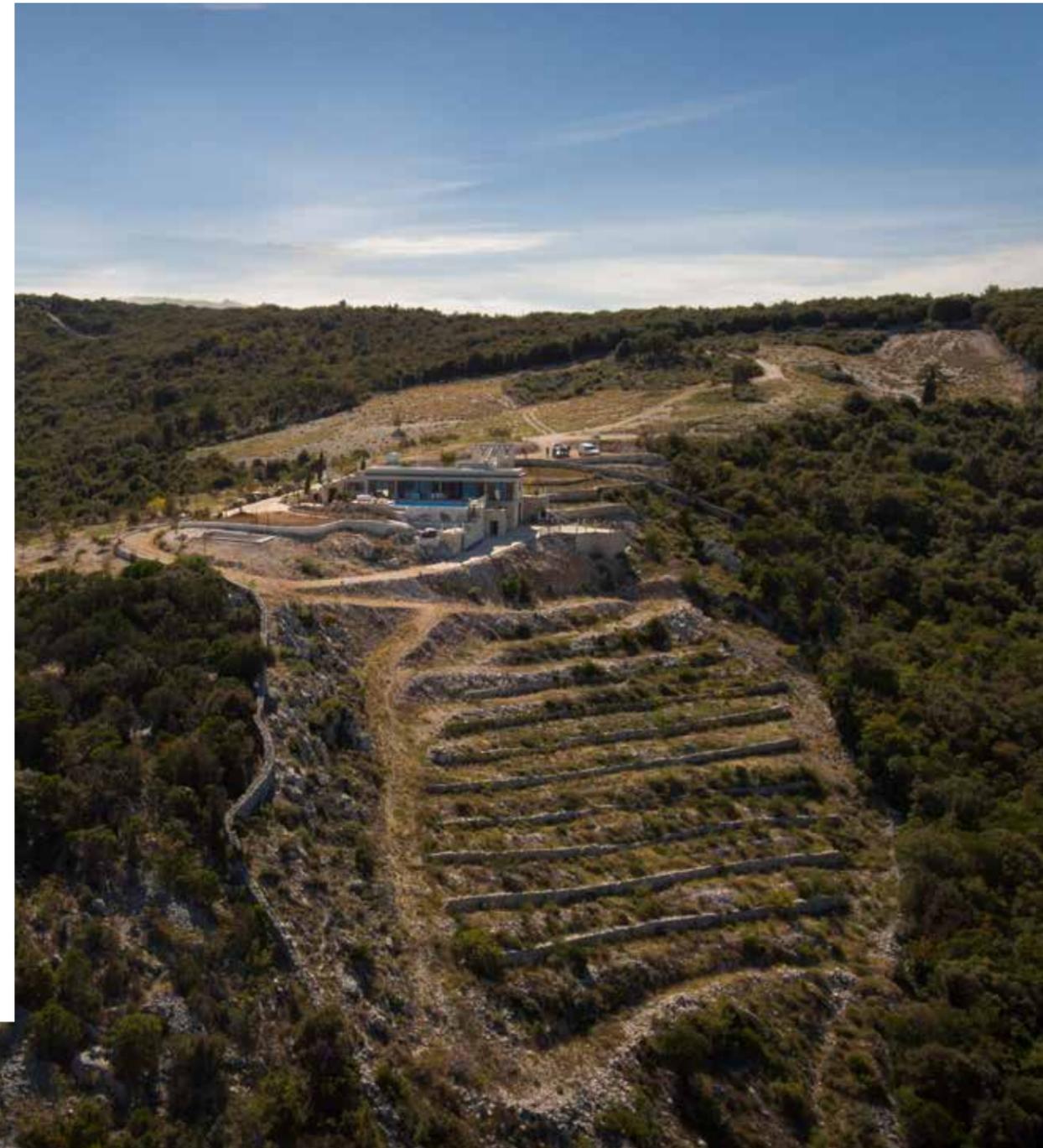
For health-conscious couples

Privacy yet luxury are the watchwords here. Couples can take full advantage of the isolation, yet be as involved in local life as they wish since almost all of the island's main locations are a mere 20 minutes away. Around the property, Italian-designed furniture, 4k TVs and a cinema room provide quality touches to any stay here. Roof windows and a handy telescope offer vistas of the starry skies – light pollution is minimal – and a lavender scent will imbue the air throughout. De-stressing and detoxifying from everyday life are paramount.

A local service can deliver fresh bread and healthy, satisfying meals from the Konoba Kopačina at Donji Humac. As the project unfolds, so a chef here will be able to prepare organically farmed foods right on the spot, using the olive oil and wine – Babić, Plavac Mali, Pošip – also being cultivated.

Also planted are fruits such as goji berries, blueberries and rose hips, antioxidant superfoods that guests can pick for themselves at leisure.





The surrounding black pines release more oxygen than other trees. Elevation does the rest.

While creating local permaculture, small-scale agriculture sectioned off around the property will introduce guests to the island way of life, encouraging them to join harvests, olive- and grape-picking and fishing.

Medical tourism – with nutritionists and massage therapists nearby, underpins a spa and wellness culture.

For the active family

With 2,700 hours of annual sunshine, Brač is ideal for adults and youngsters looking to spend most of their holiday in the great outdoors.

Included in the infrastructure so painstakingly put in place by Mirko and his team is a path connecting to beautiful Lovrečina Bay on the north coast takes a mere 10 min drive. Here, a long sandy beach and lovely bathing spots are generally uncrowded.



The 50 m2 saltwater swimming pool is cleaned in a biological way, without pollutants equipped with Counter Swimming jets, of course, meaning guests with skin ailments can dive right in. If you're here with younger ones, there are also swings. If it clouds over, there's a Billiards table, darts, family games, table tennis table and a cinema. Complete with Playstations for some winding down time.

Depending on the age group, you can also enjoy mountain biking, hiking and climbing – up at the nearby high point of Vidova Gora, you can see as far as the peaks of Biokovo.

For fun-seeking friends

Dol Hills is not only a luxurious property – it's an amazing party and event location, too. There's even a chapel of St Barbara from the 11th Century, just five minutes away from the estate, making it perfect for weddings and receptions. Mirko and his wife Helena had their wedding party here on the estate, below a canopy of stars. Not only is there no noise from neighbours – you don't have to worry about disturbing anyone.

The magical party island of Hvar is quickly reached by catamaran or speedboat, allowing you to retreat back to a few home comforts when you're all played out.

If you're looking for a relaxing morning's sightseeing, then carved into the rock face a short drive from Dol, Blaca Monastery was created by Glagolitic monks as an agricultural co-operative in the late 1500s. Its most famous occupant was hermit priest Father Niko Miličević who established a modest observatory here. The history of the island means a lot to Mirko, who centrepieced a painting of the monastery and installed a telescope for watching the twinkling night sky. After sightseeing, naturally, there's always the beach.

→ +385 91 537 0282, dolhillsestate@gmail.com, dolhillsestate.com

Zadar Top 20

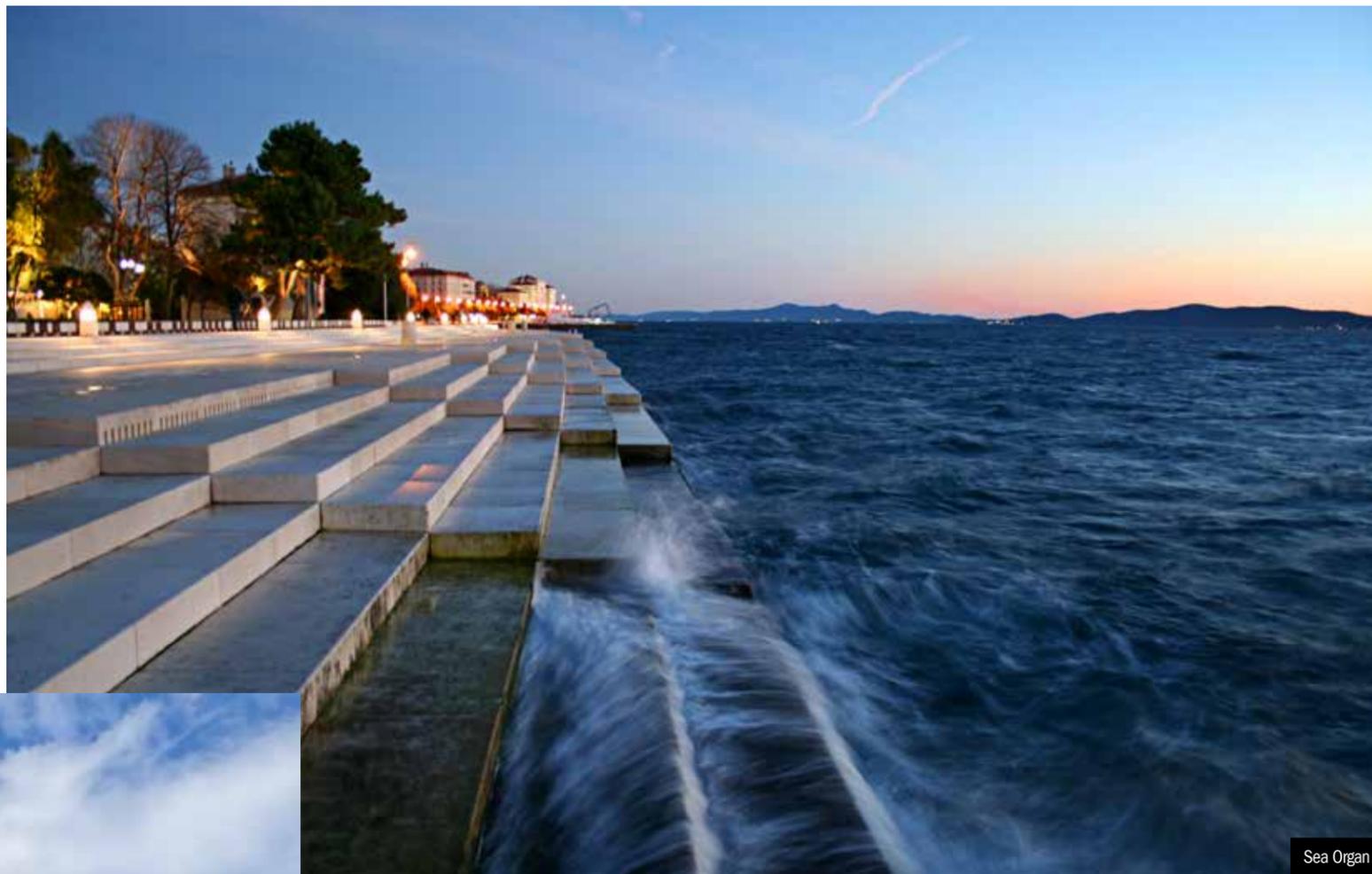
With contemporary public art alongside Roman ruins, dynamic Zadar is the new powerhouse of Dalmatia.

1 Marvel at the Sea Organ

Installed in 2005, the bizarre but immensely popular Sea Organ created by Zadar-educated Nikola Bašić has given a new dimension to the city's waterfront. As you approach the steps at the tip of the peninsula that contains the

town centre, strange noises arise from holes drilled into the marble, linked to 35 organ pipes beneath the waves. These create unworldly sounds randomly dictated by the ebb and flow of the water, an unusually comforting feeling as you lie on the flat stones and sunbathe.

→ Obala kralja Petra Krešimira IV



Sea Organ

2 Admire Byzantine treasures

Zadar's jewel in the crown is its unique collection of religious artefacts and Venetian art housed in two floors of the Treasury alongside the Church of St Mary. Known as the Gold and Silver of Zadar, it comprises sumptuous, shining reliquaries containing limbs of sundry saints, icons and crucifixes, all painstakingly decorated and finely carved. These were collated over hundreds of years by Benedictine nuns – the adjoining convent is still in operation.

→ Trg opatice Čike 1 (023 250 496)

3 Sample superior seafood at Kornat

Arguably the top table in Zadar, certainly the eaterie with the best location, overlooking the headland and regular passage of boats heading for Ugljan and Dugi otok, Kornat is known for its monkfish. Here served with truffles and home-made gnocchi, it just gets the nod over the John Dory and sea bass, other stand-outs in a menu complemented by daily

specials. Monkfish also makes an appearance as a warm appetiser, in a risotto with basil-and-fig pesto.

→ Liburnska obala 6 (023 254 501, restaurant-kornat.hr)

4 Informal excellence at Villa Hrešć

Overlooking Maestral Bay a ten-minute walk from town, this is a great mid-range option for comfort in Zadar. The suites are suitable for two to four guests, six at a push. More like condominiums, they comprise a living room, kitchenette, dining room, bedroom and bathroom with a marble washbasin, all capacious, all immaculately furnished – and all overlooking the sea. The view is stunning, the same as from the outdoor pool. There's a terrace restaurant here too, where non-guests also tuck into decent Med fare.

→ Obala kneza Trpimira 28 (023 337 570, villa-hresc.hr)

5 Learn the Roman lifestyle at the Archaeological Museum

Right on Zadar's main square originally laid out as a Roman forum, the Archaeological Museum displays a reconstruction of how downtown Iadera would have looked around the time of Christ. Centrepiecing the same regular street pattern still in place today, the forum would have been the hub of civic life, its colonnades and temples recreated here in model form, typical of any Roman municipium in many historic Mediterranean cities. Mosaics, sculpture, weaponry and glassware hint at how developed civilisation would have been here 2,000 years ago.

→ Trg opatice Čike 1 (023 250 542, amzd.hr)

6 Sip local Maraska liqueur

Zadar's signature drink is advertised all over town, splashes of cherry red embellishing uniform walls and bursting out of billboards. After olives and grapes, maraschino cherries are the third largest crop in the region and they have gone into the commercial production of the sweet-yet-slightly-sour liqueur Maraska since the 1700s. Most cafés and bars will sell it, matured in special oak casks and poured from a particular type of bottle encased in hand-woven reed. Revived in modern times, the liqueur has long been an essential element of sophisticated cocktails

such as the Aviation, created at the Hotel Wallick in New York in 1916.

7 Greet the Sun

Responsible for the longer-established Sea Organ installation, Nikola Bašić has devised another creation powered by nature: Greeting to the Sun. It depicts the solar system in the form of a circle, illuminated by photovoltaic cells in irregular but bewitching colours and patterns as the sun moves across the sky then spreads out across it in the panoply of Zadar's celebrated fiery sunset. Not as immediate as its wave-driven partner work, Greeting to the Sun requires a lot more thought and investigation on the part of the viewer – or the many casual passer-bys.

8 Trick the kids

The Museum of Illusions is a great option if you're in Zadar with the kids and you get a rainy day. Calling itself a smart playground for the brain, it's full of holograms, optical games, puzzles, kaleidoscopes, mirages and mirrors, the favourites being the anti-gravity room and the vortex tunnel. If you've got a birthday party to organise, you can even hire an illusionist with his own box of tricks.

→ Poljana Zemaljskog Odbora 2 (023 316 803, zadar.muzejiluzija.com)

9 Pitch perfect music performance with a profound ambience

There can be few better settings to hear medieval music being played live than in the ninth-century rotunda of St Donat's Church (Crkva sv Donata), historic symbol of Zadar. The largest Byzantine building in Croatia, St Donat's has long been abandoned as a place of worship. But its wonderful acoustics are put to good use every summer when it plays a leading role in a three-week festival of medieval music that starts in July. The Roman forum, St Anastasia's Cathedral and the Great Hall at Zadar University also co-host – but St Donat's is its most revered and iconic venue.

→ Trg Rimskog Foruma (amzd.hr)

10 Feast on succulent lamb at Tamaris

With so many hotels cropping up in and around Zadar these days, there seems little reason to consider a standard lodging a



St. Donatus Church



Greeting to the Sun

Zadar Top 20

ten-minute walk from the train station and even further from town. But most don't visit the Tamaris to stay there – they go there for the lamb. Spit-roasted in the traditional way, an expert hand occasionally turning the succulent creature over glowing hot coals, this is meat as fine as you'll find around nearby Pag, home of Croatian lamb. This is old-school Dalmatian dining, no nouvelles or fusions about it, and all the better for it.

→ Zagrebačka ulica 5 (023 318 700, tamaris-zadar.com.hr)

11 Ibiza-style luxury lounging at The Garden

It would be no exaggeration to say that The Garden, a Brit-run lounge bar and nightclub atop the Venetian city walls in full view of Zadar's stunning sunsets, has transformed the town from northern Dalmatian backwater to sought-after, summer-long party hub. Not all of this partying takes place here, amid sink-inable loungers and the sounds of occasional DJs, but at the music festivals spawned by The Garden team that run most of the season at out-of-town sites such as Tisno. While The Garden's no longer runs its own festival, closed after ten successful years, it welcomes hordes of partygoers looking to



The Garden Lounge

chill over cocktails and perhaps a game of chess to a lower-key electronica soundtrack.

→ Liburnska obala 6 (023 364 320, thegarden.hr)

12 Check the views atop Dalmatia's largest cathedral

Being the largest of its kind in Dalmatia and built the best part of a millennium ago, Zadar Cathedral

(or St Anastasia's, Katedrala sv Stošije) would be worth a good look around anyway, not least for its rose windows and ninth-century stone casket containing the remains of the saint in question. But climb the bell tower, then keep climbing, and you are rewarded for your trouble with a stunning view across the city. From this vantage point slap in the middle of Zadar's historic Roman centre, it takes in

2,000 years of history and miles of blue Adriatic beyond.

→ Trg Sv Stošije (023 251 708)

13 Spend the day at beach bar Famous

Borik beach is Zadar's latest nightlife hub. Where there was once just a campsite, there is now a ring of sea-facing bars, an upgraded marina and hub of international-standard resort hotels a short bus ride from town. One addition to this burgeoning scene is Famous, a self-styled 'beach house and grill', all done out in bright Caribbean colours. The attraction here, apart from the expansive terrace and sun loungers, is the phenomenal range of beers, more than 200 in all, including eight on draught. There's affordable bar food too, burgers, beer-steamed mussels and fried calamari. Everything rolls on until 1.30am, then starts again for coffee in the morning.

→ Majstora Radovana 7 (023 636 223, famous.adria-bars.hr)

14 See the see-through art at the Museum of Ancient Glass

Housed in the renovated 19th-century Cosmacendi Palace, this is one of the best collections of ancient glassware outside Italy. The extensive collection had been retrieved from rich archaeological sites in Croatia (mostly from around Zadar), many of which have still to be fully excavated. Part of the display is given over to the

history of the building including its conversion to a museum – but the focus is, of course, on the glass. There is also an absorbingly educational experience where you can learn how glass was made, watch glassblowing displays, and have a go at doing the same yourself.

→ Poljana Zemaljskog odbora 1 (023 363 831, mas-zadar.hr)

15 Informal seafood dining at Foša

This well-established fish restaurant stands just outside the city walls in a renovated stone building at Foša harbour. While the interior is all natural woods and pale colours, the terrace offers a delightful panorama of moored boats and distant islands. All the standard white fish and shellfish are served, also as part of a seafood risotto or pasta dish. There's also a range of carpaccio dishes, including raw monkfish on a bed of rock-let. Other dishes include stewed lobster with polenta, cuttlefish brodet and grilled pork with lentils.

→ Kralja Dimitra Zvonimira 2 (023 314 421, fosa.hr)

16 Take the old sea route across town

For more than 800 years, rowboats have been serving the Zadar waterfront, taking passengers from Obala kneza Trpimira embankment on the mainland to the historic centre on the peninsula. The passage takes

ten minutes – drop a few coins on the oarman's coat, spread out at the back of the small wooden vessel. Your ferryman will have learned his job from his father, who learned from his father before him. By opting to be rowed over the water rather than walk round to the footbridge, you are helping extend a long and proud tradition.

17 Superior ice cream treats at Slastičarna Donat

The Italian influence around Zadar runs deeper than just architecture, decent pizzas and 20th-century history. Every summer, Zadar's many cafés and ice-cream parlours outdo each other to provide tourists with the finest gelato. For kids, the Slastičarna Donat gets the nod, for with its towering, all-colour creations of the old-school knickerbocker glory variety, guaranteed to get a 'Wow!' when brought out before them.

→ Trg Sv Stošije 4 (098 917 5100, donatice.hr)

18 Sample the stunning, self-contained offer of the superior Falkensteiner Punta Skala

Opened in stages over the last few years, and completed in 2012, this self-contained complex just outside Petrcane outside Zadar has quickly established itself as a leading resort for family holidays and pamper-yourself breaks. Centrepiece is the five-star Highlights Hotel and Spa Iadera, a

sleek, wishbone-shaped building that houses the largest spa centre in Croatia. The four-star Diadora is designed to be the last word in family holidays. Its 250 family-suite apartments, most with sea views, accommodate two adults and two kids, complemented by entertainment at Falyk Land (supervised swimming pools, pirate ship and a petting zoo), sports and games activities.

→ Punta Skala (023 555 600, falkensteiner.com)

19 Ancient meets contemporary at Art Hotel Kalelarga

Opened in 2012, this ten-room boutique hotel occupies the laboriously renovated interior of an old stone house on Široka ulica – the main street popularly known as Kalelarga. Rooms feature exposed stonework, natural wood floors and furnishings, and a palette of soothing ochres and pastels. Moody lighting and smart modern bathrooms provide the requisite aura of cosy luxuriance. The chic

top-floor apartment is snug under attic windows. Breakfast offers a broad choice of cold treats and the hotel's café-restaurant is already hugely popular on account of its superb range of own-made cakes and sweets.

→ Majke Margarite 3 (023 233 000, arthotel-kalelarga.com)

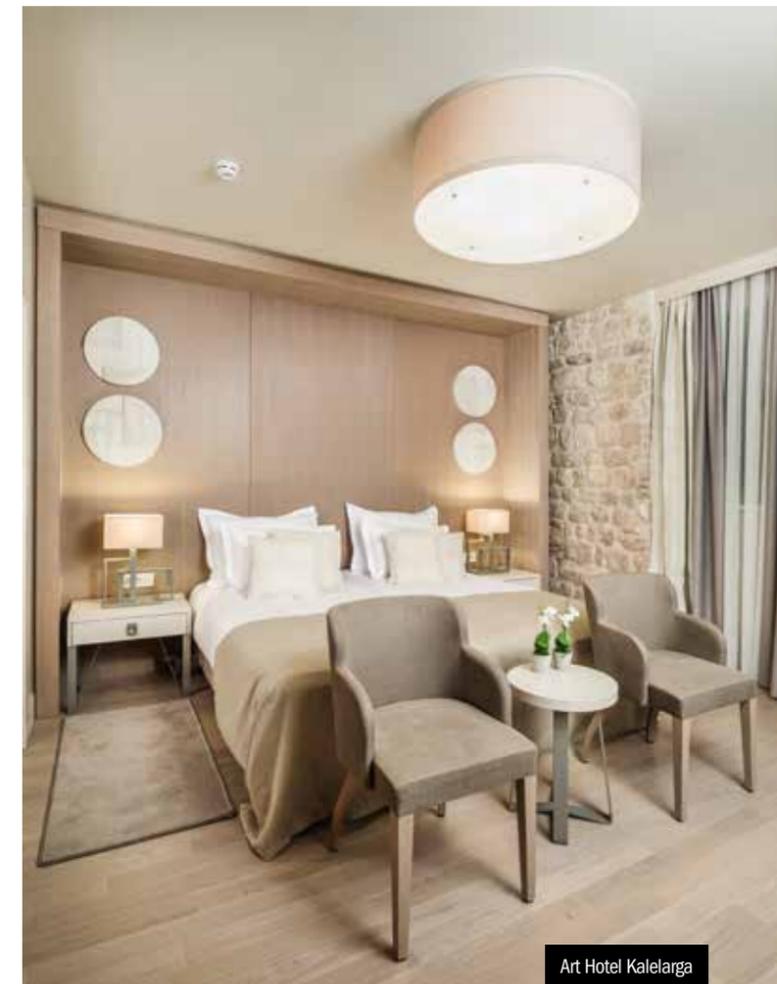
20 Downtown dining at 2 Ribara

A restyled minimalist interior, with a glass-encased, stainless-steel kitchen and wood-fired pizza oven, provides modernity and increased capacity for Dva Ribara – and there's a wide-ranging menu. This establishment is firmly downtown, adjacent to the bar quarter of Stomorica. The menu includes pretty much everything in the traditional Dalmatian cookbook and maintains consistently high standards, although it's the good-value pizzas that bring in most in the way of local trade.

→ Blaža Jurjeva 1A (023 213 445, 2ribara.com)



Famous Bar



Art Hotel Kalelarga

Šibenik Top 20

Šibenik makes a pleasant, undemanding change from its now tourist-swamped coastal counterparts.

1 Splash out at the Michelin-starred Pelegrini

Awarded a Michelin star this year, Pelegrini is the kind of establishment worth creating a city visit around. Run by passionate chef-owner Rudi Štefan, this top-notch eatery runs on a philosophy of tradition and innovation, perhaps reflected in its prime location amid the historic stone edifices of Šibenik offset by swish contemporary decor and furnishings. Certainly, the open kitchen takes classic Dalmatian cuisine and goes to town with it, eliciting the freshest flavours of hake, monkfish or lamb and balancing them with just the right choice of vegetable or staple accompaniment, nearly all sourced from nearby waters, farms and markets. The wines are also selected with care and experience.

→ Jurja Dalmatinca 1 (pelegrini.hr, 22 213 701)

2 Delight your youngsters at the International Children's Festival

Celebrating its 60th anniversary in 2018, Šibenik's International Children's Festival involves kids in theatre, film, music, puppetry and the visual arts for two weeks each June. Staged in the city's streets, squares and major landmarks, the ICF puts participation and tuition to the fore, holding workshops in subjects as diverse as dance, graphic design, comics and video. Many activities are carried out in Croatian but there is plenty of international focus, where the common language is English.

→ Various venues in Šibenik (mdf-sibenik.com)

3 Savour the best local wines and ales at VINO&INO

Exactly what central Šibenik needed, this chic but convivial wine bar provides a great selection



Pelegrini

of Croatian wines with a particularly strong showing from local boutique wineries – notably Bibich from the hills above Skradin just inland. It's also a great place to sample Croatian craft beers herb-infused rakijas and other indigenous spirits. The location is ideal; in the heart of old Šibenik but not too close to the tripper-thronged cathedral.

→ Fausta Vrančića bb (wine-bar-namalo.business.site, 91 250 6022)

4 Watch the sealife close up at Aquarium Terrarium

It's not vast by any means, occupying a traditional old stone house close to the cathedral, but Šibenik's Aquarium Terrarium contains enough variety. Sealife is the main focus, with beautiful bright tropical fish, a lively octopus, small sharks, lobsters, morays and all kinds of crabs, but you'll also find a number of reptiles, including a pair of somewhat ravenous tegu lizards from South America.

→ Stube Petra Kaera 1 (quariumsibenik.com, 99 212 5819)

5 Join the city defence at the UNESCO St Nicholas Fortress

For centuries, Croatians lived in fear of invasion from the Ottomans. Šibenik was defended by four fortresses, the most formidable being St Nicholas, which guards the narrow channel into the city from its vantage point on the islet of Ljuljevac. St Nicholas is a prime

example of defensive architecture, one of six built by Venice recently designated as a collective UNESCO World Heritage Site.

6 Get wet and wild at Dalmatia Aquapark

Part of the Solaris Beach Resort but open to all visitors, the Dalmatia Aquapark is the first of its kind in Croatia, a themed water park where children can let loose in perfect safety over 8,000 square metres. Attractions include slides, waterfalls, jets and sprinklers, as well as the lazy river that allows you to negotiate the complex in relative serenity before passing under a huge barrel of water that tips out on anyone below it from a height of 1.3 metres.

→ Dalmatia Aquapark, Hotel Solaris 86 (aquapark-dalmatia.com, 22 361 001)

7 See stunning birds of prey at Sokolarski Centar

A ten-minute drive from Šibenik in the modest village of Dubrava, the Sokolarski Centar is a visitor attraction and place of education. Most of all, though, Sokolarski is a rescue centre, set up by Emilio Mendjušić, who has also tapped into the centuries-old tradition of falconry. Here hundreds of injured birds of prey are treated each year. By throwing this sanctuary open to the public, and gathering a team of some two-dozen falconers, Mendjušić both funds his healing mission and allows visitors to observe first-hand the tricks and training needed to master the



Krka, Visovac

noble art of falconry.

→ Dubrava kod Šibenika (sokolarskicentar.com, 91 506 7610)

8 Sip slowly in the stunningly located Krešimir IV

What could be better? At the Krešimir IV, you are not only back-dropped by the walls of the 14th-century Monastery of St Francis, but overlooking Šibenik's palm-fringed embankment from its elevated location, with the Adriatic no distance beyond. That would obviously be pleasant enough, but throw in an excellent wine

selection of mainly Dalmatian origin, dozens of Croatia's latest craft beers and no fewer than 100-plus from Germany, Belgium and beyond, not to mention top-quality coffee, and you have a very impressive destination bar indeed.

→ Franje Tuđmana 1 (facebook.com/kresimiriv)

9 Swim under waterfalls at Krka National Park

Within easy reach of Šibenik, the nearest main town, Krka National Park is one of the great natural wonders in a national filled with them. Not quite as popular as Plitvice, another verdant paradise

to which it is often compared, Krka has the considerable advantage of encouraging active participation, or at least, accommodating it. While plunging into the waters around Plitvice is strictly prohibited, Krka allows visitor to swim around Skradinski buk, the lagoon at the foot of a series of 17 dramatic waterfalls. Skradinski buk can also be admired from one of the boardwalks or from the comfort of an excursion boat that also takes in the equally impressive Roški slap waterfall further upstream, and Visovac, a 16th-century monastery set on its own island. In total, Krka National Park



St Nicholas Fortress

runs along the river it is named after for more than half of its 72.5-kilometre journey, allowing for any number of treks along its many trails, looking out for wolves, golden eagles, boar and peregrine falcons.

10 Learn fascinating local history at the Victory Museum

Opened in 2016 in the presence of the mayor of Šibenik and a number of former Tito Partisans, the Victory Museum tells the story of the liberation of Dalmatia from Fascist forces in 1944. This seminal period in modern history is not something that's covered in depth in many Croatian cities, for sensitive reasons. With significant documentation in English, this permanent exhibition shows how Tito's forces, with eventual help from the Allies, cleared Dalmatia of Italian and German troops, illustrated with diagrams, maps, original documentation and photographs from the time.

→ Nikole Ružičica 1 (sibenik-tourism.hr/en/museums)

11 See ancient flora at the Medieval Mediterranean Gardens

The Medieval Mediterranean Gardens fills a prominent space around the former St Lawrence Monastery, on the edge of Šibenik's historic centre. The plot had lain unkempt for centuries until landscaping expert Kiš and his team set to work, carefully planting medicinal herbs and plants in the shape of a cross, juxtaposed with the occasional fruit tree for colour. It operates year-round, hosting open-air events in summer.

→ Strme stube 1 (sibenik-tourism.hr/en/medieval-mediterranean-garden)

12 Retrace Šibenik's distinct differences at the City Museum

Alongside the Cathedral of St James, facing the Adriatic, the medieval Rector's Palace was converted into the Šibenik City Museum in 1975, occupying the atrium and south wing. As was the way with museums at that time, this institution is quite old-school – you shouldn't come here expecting hands-on features and displays that move or light up. However, given the unique nature of Šibenik in relation to its neighbours, settlements built by Greeks,



International Children's Festival

Šibenik Top 20

Romans or both, evidence of the local Illyrian and Croatian heritage here offer a different insight than you'll find in Split or Zadar.

→ Gradska vrata 3 (22 213 880)

13 Hang loose at the eclectic Azimut

Every Croatian town should have an Azimut, a fun, unpretentious hangout in the city centre where you might come across an alternative live act, a DJ or an exhibition, all over the course of three days. What it probably won't be is boring. Concerts are given by a broad range of Croatian performers. Tucked in behind the waterfront near the Cathedral of St James, with its junkyard furniture and pretty inner courtyard, Azimut is an easily accessible and funky spot to spend an evening out, whatever the entertainment.

→ Obala palih omladinaca 2
(facebook.com/azimut.sibenik)

14 Pamper yourself at Amadria Park Lifestyle Jure

Within the Solaris leisure and hotel complex on an Adriatic-facing headland a short drive from the historic centre, Amadria Park Lifestyle Jure is the kind of hotel Šibenik has been waiting for for years. The Amadria Park contains

the Jure Spa, where you can order a whole raft of massage treatments from expert therapists, spend the afternoon hopping between three saunas (steam, bio and Finnish) with their full-length glass walls overlooking the outdoor pool, laze in the relaxarium zone and treat tired muscles to the water jets below the surface of the saltwater pool. Here, amid the decking and the sun loungers, you can finish your day's pampering in the open air, as the sun goes down.

→ Hotel Solaris 86 (amadriapark.com/en/hotels/hotel-jure, 22 361 001)

15 Monastic history brought to life at the Museum of St Francis

The Museum of St Francis is named after the adjoining monastery that dates back to the 1300s, the imposing white building that dominates the far end of Šibenik's main waterside promenade. It has a library filled with 10,000 volumes, including the priceless Šibenska molitva, one of the first known pieces of text in Croatian and Latin. But the museum also has interactive and audiovisual sections that bring the 700-year history of monastic activity to life, giving the visitor a vivid picture of the simple life serving God in the



Aquapark Dalmatia

Middle Ages. A lovely landscaped garden completes the picture.

→ Trg Nikole Tomasea 1 (22 460 411)

16 Visit UNESCO jewel the Cathedral of St James

Created from fine white limestone and marble from Brač, this UNESCO World Heritage site, a basilica of three naves, a signature dome but no tower, is mainly the work of two architects who

required 100 years to build it. Juraj Dalmatinac, whose statue stands on a tall column outside the main entrance, was originally commissioned to craft a Renaissance jewel from a hotly debated Gothic model. Before his death in 1473, he left behind the main portal, the Lion Gate and the stunning baptistry. Niccolò di Giovanni Fiorentino completed the master architect's work, though the signature dome echoes the Florentine roots of this later sculptor. The cathedral still required another 30 years to finish after Fiorentino's death, and was consecrated in 1555. The Cathedral of St James was then restored after significant damage by Serbian shelling in 1991.

→ Trg Republike Hrvatske 1

17 Learn all the local secrets at Etnoland

Sprawling over 15,000 square metres at Pakovo Selo, the other side of Krka National Park from Šibenik, Etnoland is a recreation of a traditional Dalmatian community, demonstrating and celebrating a way of life that lasted over many generations. Accessible

by a pre-booked tour that lasts 90 minutes or three hours plus if you're staying for lunch, this walled complex comprises an ensemble of green-shuttered stone houses, each filled with the kind of rustic furnishings that would have been in domestic use a century or so ago. The attraction here is the demonstrations, showing how smoked ham, rakija brandy and other local specialties are prepared, classic Dalmatian dishes slow-roasted by the old-school peka method then offered to visitors. In summer, they stage open-air performances of Dalmatian folk tunes and dances.

→ Oštarija, Pakovo Selo (dalmati.com)

18 Dine romantically at Barun

Out of town, on the road to the Solaris hotel resort, family-run Barun has long been a favourite with locals out to impress their new date/in-laws/business associates. Located in a large modern house that is also a hotel, the first-floor dining room has a fantastic view over cultivated fields and offshore islands. The interior is as classy as the view – antique chairs, smart tablecloths and plenty of greenery. Established for over 20 years, Barun has a menu best described as upmarket traditional, with Italian and French influences well to the fore. A popular choice is steak: châteaubriand for two or biftek café de paris. Eight apartments are for rent too.

→ Podsolarsko 66 (barunsibenik.com/en, 99 315 3914)

19 Step back in time at Fort Barone

Fort Barone was originally built in double-quick time during fears of Turkish invasion in the mid 1600s. The era is now captured and dramatised as part of the augmented reality system that walks visitors through the design, military planning and architecture of the day. Hiring AR glasses from the ticket office, you can let a local historian and an eye-witness account reveal what life was like under Ottoman siege, as was the case in 1646. The fortress now also features the Barone Bistro, a panoramic café-eaterie that puts local fare and wines to the fore, inventive seafood and meaty nibbles complemented by the lesser-known labels of regional wine producers.

→ Put Vuka Mandušića (barone.hr/en, 91 619 6566)

20 Enjoy the exclusive offer of Hotel Panorama

Recently refreshed, fab views of the Krka estuary are the main draw of this 1970s concrete-and-glass cube by the Šibenik Bridge, four kilometres west of town. For panoramas, pick one of the south-facing rooms – and try to be up to watch the sunrise from your balcony – or dine in the terrace café-restaurant. Entertainment is provided by a gym, the mini football pitch and bungee jumping from the bridge.

→ Sibenski Most 1 (hotel-panorama.hr, 22 213 398)



ETNOLAND

While a visit to Šibenik offers the true beauty of a Dalmatian town and the National park Krka is a gateway to the beauty nature offers, Etnoland in Pakovo Selo stands for rich cultural heritage of the Dalmatian hinterland.

Located only 10 km from NP Krka this family run historical and cultural site brings Dalmatian history to life. Go back in time and enjoy one of the award winning cultural heritage tours.

Experience authentic, interactive and entertaining storytelling. Try the famous Drniš pršut and enjoy the amazing family style peka.

Etnoland can only be visited by pre-booked tour which lasts 1.5 hours or about 3 hours when a meal is included. Visitors should visit their website www.etnoland.com for booking and additional information.

📍 Put Čikole 4, 22320 Pakovo Selo, Croatia
☎ +385 99 2200 200 📧 info@dalmati.com
☎ +385 99 2200 204 📧 www.etnoland.com



Book a tour and get a free cheese tasting

Promocode: 9DLN8W4



Etnoland



Rijeka Top 20

Port and transport hub in Kvarner, Rijeka merits exploration thanks to a fascinating past and a lively city centre.

1 Get your contemporary art fix

Moved to a new location near Rijeka train station, the Museum of Modern & Contemporary Art (MMSU) is arguably the most significant and challenging Croatian gallery outside Zagreb. Along with

a permanent collection of art in all forms, including new media and posters, the MMSU hosts a regularly changing agenda of temporary shows, running the whole gamut of visual culture. The organisation also oversees a salon on the focal Korzo. → Krešimirova 26C (051 334 280, mmsu.hr)



Museum of Modern & Contemporary Art



Trsat Castle

2 Splash out on seafood

This restaurant is the main reason to visit Kastav, 20 minutes from Rijeka by taxi or No.18 bus – although there is a pretty hilltop old town to explore after dinner. You'll get superior seafood prepared by a creative chef, served in several small but tasty courses, each paired with a different wine. This could be the best meal you have during your stay in Rijeka, and also one of the most expensive: the waiter will suggest a wonderful set menu. If you're going to splash out, do

it here. It's also a boutique hotel, should you decide to stay over.

→ Trg Lokvina 3, Kastav (051 691 519, kukuriku.hr)

3 Get caught up in the carnival

Croatia's main annual public celebration, February's Rijeka Carnival now attracts some 100,000 visitors to the city centre. Consisting of several events in the run-up to the main parade on the Sunday before Ash Wednesday, the former pagan ritual still features bellringers in terrifying masks and

costumes, the Zvončari, who cast out the dark of winter and summon the coming of spring. Find a place early on Rijeka's main street, the Korzo, and be prepared for late partying.

→ (rijeki-karneval.hr/en)

4 Dine well, but informally

Municipium is set in a grand Habsburg-era building, tucked away in a quiet courtyard right in the centre of town. Door staff might greet you at the entrance, but don't worry, this provides a

very informal dining experience, down to the day's menu chalked up on a board. This menu is usually fish-oriented, reasonably priced considering the quality of service, presentation and the fare itself. The wine list runs to scores of (mainly Croatian) varieties, a decent number available by the glass. Note also the cut-price lunch specials, marende.

→ Trg Riječke rezolucije 5 (051 213 000)

5 Party with the locals

Down at the harbourfront, Phanas pub is best experienced late at night when the two-floor wooden pub with maritime knick-knacks rings with commercial dance tunes and a rock soundtrack. It gets busy late on and difficult to get inside. Guinness, Kilkenny and Stella, wines and cheap cocktails complement the domestic beer, but the drinks here are secondary to the party buzz. Open until silly o'clock at weekends.

→ Ivana Zajca 9 (091 926 4801, facebook.com/phanaspub)

6 Check out the City Museum

Set in a pavilion alongside the Governor's Palace – and thus alongside the History & Maritime Museum, making it a convenient first port of call for any first-time visitor to Rijeka – the three-floor City Museum has a modest permanent exhibition but stages a number of fascinating temporary ones. Exhibition subjects tend to concentrate on Rijeka's seafaring past.

→ Muzejski trg 1/1 (051 336 711, muzej-rijeka.hr)

7 Visit Rijeka's unmissable centrepiece

Visit Trsat castle for the panoramic view alone, best enjoyed from the terrace café beneath the Nugent mausoleum – the Kvarner Bay spreads out before you. Irish-born Austro-Hungarian naval commander Laval Nugent-Westmeath fought Napoleon and rebuilt the medieval Frankopan fortress to house his family and his art collection – his hoard of Greek vases can now be seen in Zagreb's Museum of Archaeology. The mausoleum is worth a look, partly if you like your Central-European history, partly to see how the dynasty looked back then.

→ Petra Zrinskoga, Trsat (no phone)

SUMMER CLASSICS 2019

ARENA PULA



eventim

Giuseppe Verdi

AIDA / 25 July

Ludwig van Beethoven

SYMPHONY NO. 9

“ODE TO JOY” / 27 July

Georges Bizet

CARMEN / 1 August

Advance booking: www.eventim.hr
CNT Ivana pl. Zajca Box Office
Tel. +385(0)51 337 114
e-mail: blagajna@hnk-zajc.hr
www.hnk-zajc.hr

www.summerclassics.live

SEASON
2019/2020

19
20



HRVATSKO
NARODNO
KAZALIŠTE
IVANA PL.
ZAJCA
RIJEKA

Croatian
National
Theatre
Ivan pl. Zajc

PUCCINI TRILOGY

MADAME BUTTERFLY

Conductor: Ville Matvejeff
Director: Dražen Sirišćević
Dates: Oct 19, Oct 22, Nov 25, Nov 28,
Dec 2 and Dec 4 2019

TOSCA

Conductor: Yordan Kamdzhlov
Director: Marin Blažević
Dates: Nov 2, Nov 4, Nov 7,
Nov 11 and Nov 13 2019

LA BOHEME

Conductor: Ville Matvejeff
Director: Fabrizio Melano
Dates: Nov 16, Nov 19 and Nov 22 2019

Tchaikovsky: THE NUTCRACKER

Choreography: Mauro de Candia
Conductor: Pavle Zajcev
Dates: Dec 7, Dec 9, Dec 12, Dec 13, Dec 14,
Dec 18, Dec 19, Dec 20, and Dec 21 2019

NEW YEAR'S EVE CONCERTS

Conductor: Yordan Kamdzhlov
Programme featuring works by Rossini, Mozart,
Wagner, Verdi, J. Strauss and more
Dates: Dec 27, Dec 28 and Dec 30 2019

IN 2020...

Wagner: TRISTAN UND ISOLDE

Conductor: Ville Matvejeff
Director: Anne Bogart
Dates: Feb 22, Feb 26 and Feb 29 2020

FIND OUT MORE AT... www.hnk-zajc.hr

Theatre sales office: phone +385 51 355 909, 00385 51 355 924; e-mail: prodaja@hnk-zajc.hr
Theatre box office: tel. +385 51 337 114; e-mail: blagajna@hnk-zajc.hr



Peek&Poke

8 Pamper yourself at the Grand Hotel Bonavia

Rijeka's classiest option, part of the Poreč-based Plava Laguna group and right in the heart of town, this is a modern business hotel with a spa and gym. Sauna cabins and massage and beauty treatments have also been introduced. The 120 rooms are tastefully done out, the

in-house Kamov restaurant is one of the best in town, and the terrace café overlooks the city.

→ Dolac 4 (051 357 100, 051 357 980, bonavia.hr)

9 Grab a quality lunch in the city centre

With a great city-centre location and a reputation as one of the

best places in town, Zlatna Školjka "The Golden Conch" can charge higher prices than most. Along with the usual seafood offerings, appetisers include fish carpaccio with capers, and marinated salmon. The day's catch is displayed on ice, and includes a wide selection of molluscs. A decent range of Croatian wines may accompany.

The hefty salads can work as a small meal, followed by a number of cheeses. Snappy service adds to a pleasant atmosphere.

→ Kružna 12A (051 213 782, zlatna-skoljka.hr)

10 Get nostalgic at Peek&Poke

Both a museum and a club for enthusiasts, Peek&Poke is one of Rijeka's most unique attractions. Dedicated to the early days of computers and computerised games, Peek&Poke also looks to reassess the reputation of those pioneers, mocked at the time, whose groundbreaking ideas eventually made our lives easier or more entertaining. Sir Clive Sinclair, for example, is given a stellar biography. All tolled, some 2,000 consoles, terminals and calculators are exhibited, either in display cases or for hands-on investigation.

→ Ivana Grohovca 2A (051 562 100, 091 780 5709, peekpoke.hr)

11 Visit one of Rijeka's quirkiest hangouts

CukariKafë is a cross between a modern art gallery, a film set for a children's fairytale adventure and a passenger steamer cruising up the River Nile. Everything about the place exudes

character: the list of speciality beers includes not just Duvel and Chimay but several lesser-known Belgian brands as well. And unless you specify otherwise, tea will be served with a dandy slice of fresh orange.

→ Trg Jurja Klovića 4 (099 888 5949, facebook.com/cukarikafe)

12 Sample fantastic fish and seafood

The once-tiny seafood bistro Konoba Na Kantunu has expanded into the neighbouring room and kitted itself out with new furniture – its reputation for serving some of Rijeka's best seafood in a simple setting remains unchanged. Settle at one of the rustic wooden tables in the bright, modern interior and admire the trays of just-caught fish and crustaceans chilling behind the glass. Point at your choice and wait for it to be expertly grilled, perhaps dressed lightly with olive oil and big chunks of sea salt, and then served up as a minimalist masterpiece. The car park terrace gets the sun and gives a view of the docks. You can find fancier, but not much better.

→ Demetrova 2 (051 313 271)

13 Party on the sea

A slick, modern glass-enclosed structure, sitting all by itself on a pier in the main harbour, houses an upmarket bar and nightclub that draws a mix of yuppies, tourists, hipsters and hard-drinking barflies. The terrace looks out onto the sea; inside is a carefully designed, dimly lit space, with high tables and tall stools in the middle of the bar area, and lower chairs with zebra-striped cushions at the two ends. The darkness releases inhibitions, and the techno and trance music inspire a good time.

→ Gat Karoline Riječke (091 490 4042, facebook.com/KarolinaBarRijeka)

14 Catch a fresh deal

Although Bistro Mornar is next to the docks and the marine terminal, the views from its L-shaped corner terrace include just a snippet of sea and a whole load of car park. Forget the scenery: hearty meat dishes here satisfy, and the fish comes right off the boats or from the nearby market, which means it's fresher and cheaper than most places in town. Join hungry locals and

sailors as you tuck into generous platters of calamari, sardines or superior freshly caught whitefish at amazing prices.

→ Riva Boduli 5A (051 312 222, facebook.com/bistromornar)

15 Sip Guinness in an Irish pub

On a small square on a hill in Rijeka's Old Town, a Guinness sign announces this quaint old-style wood-and-brass pub, the Celtic Caffè Bard. There's Kilkeny beer too, but thankfully it's more than just another faux Irish joint. The walls are cluttered with interesting local art, and the bar and upstairs gallery are packed with interesting local people, mostly in their twenties and thirties. Music ranges from electronica selected by the staff to occasional Irish folk bands. Seats outside, too.

→ Trg Grivica 6B (051 215 235)

16 Linger by the harbour with a Belgian beer

Formerly the Belgian Beer Brasserie and still bearing decorative traces of the Benelux, prominent terrace bar Brasserie AS, with an atmospheric interior, remains one of the key spots to drink in Rijeka. Located so close to the harbour you can see shipspassing from the tables

outside, it's worth a longer linger for its hearty Belgian-style cuisine and, most notably, brews in draught and bottled form from the land of beer.

→ Trg Republike Hrvatske 2 (051 212 148, ugostiteljstvo-as.com)

17 Try the best craft beers

Uphill from the centre in Trsat but well worth seeking out, this Rijeka branch of Zagreb's Beertija bar sticks to the same formula – a superb range of bottled beers from all over the world, and well-chosen weekend DJs. Look out, too, for indie nights, Doors tribute bands and all kinds of excuses for a party.

→ Slavka Krautzeka 12 (051 452 183)

18 Book a room with a view

Revamped by the Best Western group, Hotel Jadran contains 66 nicely fitted rooms in an enviable shoreside location. Set by Rijeka's first stretch of swimmable sea with its own stop on the No.2 bus route east of town in Pećine, the Jadran ('Adriatic') has been a spot for bathing since it opened in 1914. There's a supplement charged for sea-facing rooms. Half- and full-board deals are available.

→ Šetalište XIII Divizije 46 (051 216 600, jadran-hoteli.com/jadran-en)

19 Dine classically

Fabulously located up in Trsat, the Trsatika eatery, part pizzeria, part grill offers high-grade versions of renowned standards, with a terrace view to boot. House specialities include lamb chop with homemade noodles, tuna steak with polenta and salsa verde, and ragout with pasta. The pair of you, if carnivores, could order the steak-and-potatoes for two. À la carte, you've got all the domestic favourites, grilled squid, monkfish and pljeskavica meat patty, here served with feta cheese.

→ Šetalište J Rakovca 33, Trsat (051 451 716, restaurant-trsatika.com/en)

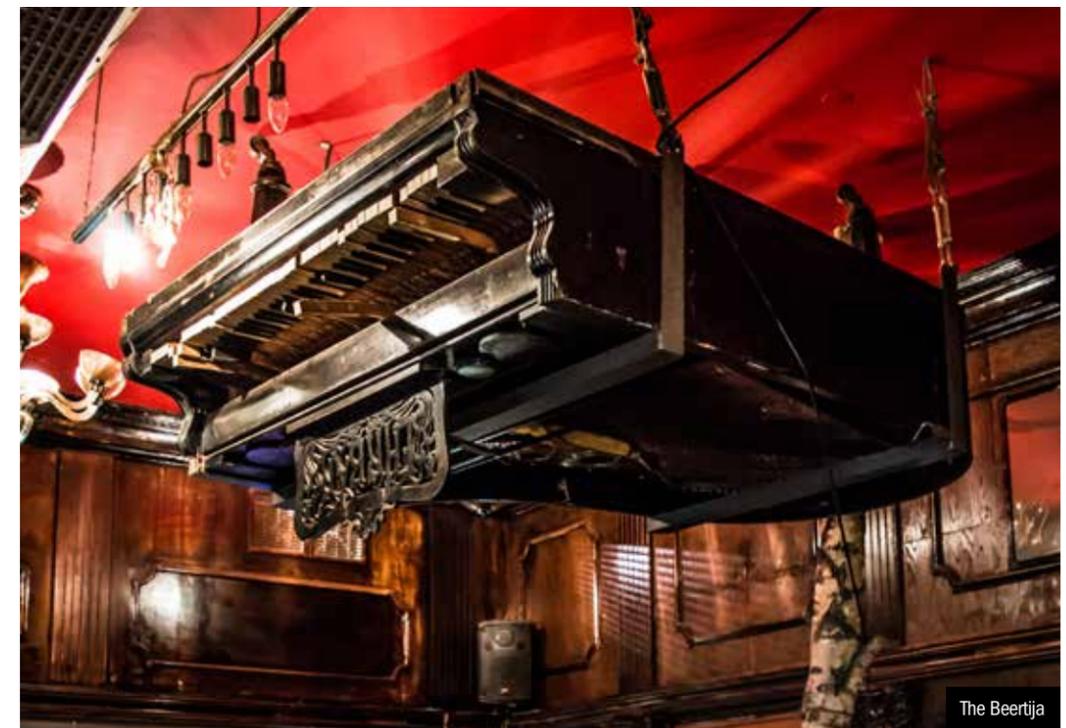
20 Familiarise yourself with Rijeka's past

Built in the 1890s by Hungarian architect Alajos Hauszmann, also responsible for similarly stately buildings in Budapest, the Governor's Palace is worth exploration not just for the cultural attractions within and around it – the Rijeka City Museum and the History & Maritime Museum – but because of its own history. A century ago, with the collapse of the Habsburg Empire, Italian poet Gabriele D'Annunzio seized control of Rijeka and installed himself in the palace. Mussolini duly removed him but for that short period, Rijeka was the poet's personal domain.

→ Muzejski trg 1



Bistro Mornar



The Beertija

Pula Top 20

Istria's historic main city has everything from colosseums to culinary wonders.

1 Explore Croatia's Colosseum

It doesn't require much imagination to conjure up the gladiatorial battles that would have taken place in Pula's Amphitheatre 2,000 years ago. In fact, you can even stand in the tunnels and corridors where warriors and lions were kept before entertaining crowds of up to 25,000. Built over the course of a century, the Amphitheatre was given its final touches in AD81 by the Emperor Titus, also responsible for the Colosseum in Rome. Today Pula's is more intact, boasting a near complete ring of walls. It is also in regular use, staging the Film Festival, the opening night of electronic music bash Outlook and big-name concerts.

2 Visit a Roman temple

Pula's Roman Forum was once fringed by three temples. While it remains the main square of the city's historic centre, car-free and dotted with café terraces, the Forum now only has one: the Temple of Augustus. Standing next to the City Hall, which ate up part of the Temple of Juno, the Temple of Augustus is remarkably intact, and considered one of the finest of its kind outside Italy. Supported by elegant Corinthian columns, it beckons to be explored but its later uses, once as a granary, have cleared its interior of much historic detail. What you see is a lapidarium, with a display of Roman sculpture – but the thrill of being inside such as stately landmark built for and during the time of Augustus should satisfy most curious visitors.

3 Go wild at Outlook

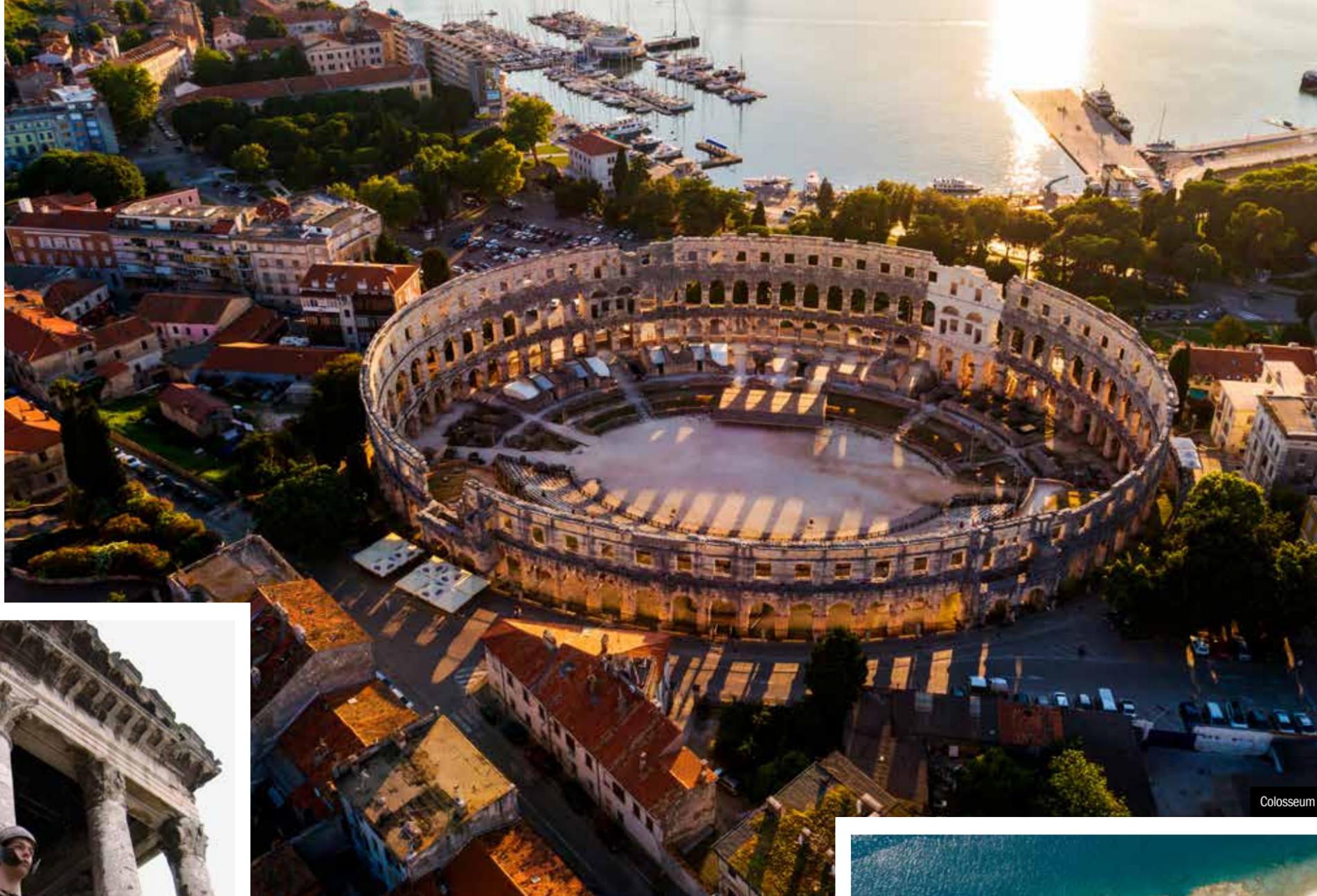
The Croatian offshoot of Leeds festival SubDub, September's Outlook is a four-day celebration of soundsystem culture that takes place at two stand-out

locations around Pula. After the opening night at the Amphitheatre, the action moves to the main site at the abandoned fort of Punta Christo. Tunnels, moats and beaches all come into play as leading exponents of dubstep, ragga, garage and reggae make best use of the isolated location. Three-hour boat parties set off at regular intervals.

→ outlookfestival.com



Temple of Augustus



Colosseum

4 Hit the water at Medulin

The main destination in Istria for watersports, Medulin spreads out around a twisting promontory a short drive (or bus ride) south-west of Pula. Dotted with campsites and resort hotels, Medulin offers all kinds of activities on and, to a lesser extent, off the water. You can charter a boat or learn how to sail, dive with varying degrees of difficulty, windsurf, surf, waterski, jetski or just jump on an inflatable banana boat.

5 Sample classic Istrian dishes in 21st-century surroundings

Recently opened Epulon Food & Wine sits by Pula's historic centre but this contemporary eatery is anything but staid. Smooth light

wood and bare brick typify this open-plan, high-ceilinged establishment, offset by industrial-style lighting. Istrian tapas may be one way to describe the menu, although you may also find regional favourites such as fuži pasta with truffles, seafood spaghetti and the like. Portions are generous, particularly where burgers are concerned. Of the many Istrian wines, Tomaz from Motovun is the most prominent, rosé, malvazija and teran. Occasional live music augments your pleasant dining experience.

→ Epulonova 4 (098 949 9023, facebook.com/epulonfoodwine)

6 Admire photography at Galerija Makina

Calling itself 'an exhibition space for contemporary photography', the evening-only Galerija

Makina near the Pula waterfront offers a regularly changing calendar of challenging art. Run by Hassan Abdelghani, a photographer himself, the gallery staged shows with New York, a women's prison and motherhood as their themes. Displays are not limited to photographic paper – video works are also included, such as Nothing New Under The Sun by award-winning Austrian Michael Goldgruber in 2017. For the autumn of 2018, Aleks Đakovski's Prolaznik ('Passerby') attracted the cream of Pula's cultural scene to its opening night.

→ Kapitolinski trg 1 (092 306 7619)

7 Sip coffee at Cvajner

With a prime location on the focal Roman forum, Cvajner does justice to its surroundings, filling a former bank with tastefully arranged retro furniture, objets d'art and bohemian finds. Its alternative name is the Kunstcafe. But there's more to Cvajner than wacky design beneath high ceilings. Offering the best coffee in town, Cvajner also has the best selection of beers, from Belgium, Germany and beyond, and cooling fruit cocktails in summer. Throw in a shaded terrace beside the Renaissance City Hall and 2,000-year-old Temple of Augustus, and you several compelling reasons to start, or end, the day here.

→ Forum 2



Fort Punta Christo



Restaurant Milan

8 Sample local wines at Enoteca Istriana

With 14 choices of malvasia alone, the Enoteca Istriana on the Forum is Pula's go-to venue for regional wines. Sommelier Alena Stuparić has selected the red Teran range – from Marko Geržinić, Gianfranco Kozlović and Franc Arman – with equal care and attention. Both an outlet and a bar, the Enoteca is also the place to taste the famed Istrian prosciutto and olives. Knowledgeable staff are on hand to guide the uninitiated, and a small array of samples might be the way to start any visit.

→ Forum 11 (099 323 6541, stefanija.com/hr/enoteka)

9 Catch an affordable lunch at Hook and Cook

Istrian street food may be one way to describe Hook and Cook Pula, a convivial newbie right on the city's main drag of Sergijevaca. As well as piscine renditions of quick-lunch favourites – tunasaurus, prawnstilla, tuna steak burger – H&C offers marende, cheap lunches as once found all along the Croatian littoral. For under 40kn, you may be served sardines, tuna salad or brodet, best accompanied by a glass of equally affordable house red. The chips are also excellent – with a portion of fried calamari, your basic but delicious meal is complete.

→ Sergijevaca 18

10 Fine dine at Milan

In a secluded spot by the naval cemetery outside of the city centre, Milan has been the gold standard for quality dining in Pula over many years. Reassuringly pricy but by no means extortionate, this family-run concern is the kind of place that allows you to indulge in one holiday splash-out. Shellfish is the way to go here, and most dishes involve the own-made olive oil produced within close range of the restaurant. Much like the menu, the wine list is extensive and focused on Istrian produce. Milan is also a three-star hotel, so if you're making a night of it, you can even stay over.

→ Stoja 4 (052 300 200, milan1967.hr)

11 Party at Saccorgiana Bay

Open until 2am and 4am all weekend, the summer-only Zeppelin Beach Bar attracts regular revellers from Pula to a stretch of beach right in Saccorgiana Bay. A music policy of electronica-only usually involves house or dubstep, though the ZBB can also be patronised by day, when you can find a table and welcome shade under the trees. Cocktails are the way to go here, all reasonably affordable so you'll have enough for the taxi back into town.

→ Zlatne stijene, Uvala Saccorgiana, Verudela (091 654 5117, facebook.com/pg/ZeppelinBeachBar)

12 Browse Pula Market

Unlike the main markets in major Croatian cities such as Split and Dubrovnik, Pula's is housed in a historic building with a distinctive architectural style. Constructed out of wrought iron by the Habsburgs, Pula Market was unveiled before city dignitaries on 18 October 1903. Around the impressive creation of metal and glass, they planted rows of chestnut trees to provide shade, where outdoor stalls were also set up. A complete six-month rebuild in 1997 remained true to the original while improving conditions of storage, refrigeration and ventilation. Traders still fill two floors with meat, fish and sundry local produce, while fresh fruit, vegetables, honeys, wines and oils can be found outside under the ever-present chestnut trees.

→ Narodni trg 9 (052 218 122, trznica-pula.hr)

13 Discover Istria's oldest urban settlement

Past Pula Airport, some 10km north-east of town, Nesactium was the main settlement of the original Histri tribe who would give the region its name. When the Romans laid siege to the town, legend has it that its leader, Epulon, and local families killed themselves rather than be taken prisoner. The Romans duly destroyed what was left of original Nesactium and

they created a new town on its site, with a forum, baths and temples. After the fall of the Roman Empire, Nesactium later fell into disrepair. Today the site is an archaeological park, with remains of the walls built by the Histri tribe and the Romans, of a necropolis and the private villas where the better-off lived 2,000 years ago.

→ Muntić (ami-pula.hr)

14 Follow a Mediterranean diet

Tucked away amid a scattering of holiday homes some 2km from the sea, Farabuto takes some finding – but local taxi drivers are pretty familiar with it by now. The reason is seasonal – here, the menu changes according to the time of year. The team at Farabuto rely on small-batch local producers to supply meat, cheese and vegetables, the fish landed close by and within a relatively short time of it being treated to Belci or Šlajner olive oil. This is the place to try the famed langoustines from Kvarner Bay or, a rarity in these parts, goat – according to season, of course.

→ Sisplac ulica 15 (052 386 074, farabuto.hr)

15 Investigate contemporary art

Located in this adapted space of a former printing works since 2011, the Museum of Contemporary Art of Istria has been staging regular exhibitions while working on setting up a more permanent home within the Venetian fortress. The latest date for relocation is 2020. In similar vein, the museum, known by its Croatian acronym of MSUI, has a somewhat flexible structure, broken down into four main areas. These include Designs & Posters, and Photography, Film & Video, as well as Contemporary Art and Foreign Art. Temporary shows tend to focus on Istrian artists, though there's always room for works from elsewhere in the region, such as the sculptures of Bosnia's Alem Korkut, by way of recent example.

→ Sv Ivana 1 (052 351 541, msu-istre.hr)

16 Scale Pula Fortress

When the Venetians wanted a defensive fortress built here, they turned to French military architect Antoine de Ville. Best known for his star-shaped citadel at Montreuil in the

TIME OUT ISTRIA

DOWNLOAD YOUR COPY NOW!



Want to read Time Out Istria on your computer, smartphone or tablet for free?
timeout.com/croatia/digital-edition

TimeOut
 ISTRIA

Pula Top 20

Pas-de-Calais, de Ville created a similar construction for Pula. On the lofty site where the ancient tribe of Histri built their fort, the four-pointed fortress now protected Pula's port. Today it provides fine views of the historic centre to one side and the cranes of the nearby shipyard to the other. Sadly, you won't be able to see much of the Roman theatre that once stood below – its stones were put to good use here in the 1630s.

17 Enter Pula in triumph

Having helped win the Battle of Actium in 31BC, the high-ranking Sergii family built a triumphal arch to themselves in Pula. The Arch of the Sergii remains the main gateway into what is now Pula's historic centre, virtually intact after more than 2,000 years. Today's pedestrians walk below its portal to access ulica Sergijevaca, somewhat incongruously passing a branch of Spanish clothing chain Mango. Closer inspection of the historic landmark reveals details relating to the events of 31BC, the names of the Sergii clan inscribed on the columns, and a chariot on the frieze.

18 Admire art and party in a war-time shelter

Pula's latest and perhaps most unique attraction is so-called Zerostrasse, accessed at Carrarina Nos.1 and 3. A series of tunnels built



Brijuni

to protect Pula citizens during air raids – originally for World War I but also for World War II – these passages are some three to six metres wide and 2.5 metres high. If you're visiting in summer, you might enjoy the cool – the temperature never rises above 20°C. Today a part of the tunnel is used for exhibitions, cultural gatherings and parties.

19 See how cranes light up a whole shipyard

Lighting Giants is the unique work of creative designer Dean Skira, who brings Pula's Uljanik Shipyard to life by illuminating its cranes. A sophisticated remote control system governs the lighting and scenography, and involves some 16,000 different color combinations. This spectacular show and

lighting display runs every evening from dusk until 10pm, and until midnight in summer, with different combinations for special occasions, holidays and events.

20 Explore Brijuni

The Brijuni archipelago lies off Istria's west coast, a 15-minute boat journey from Fažana, just north of Pula. Most of the 14 islands are off limits to the public. Luckily, there is so much to see on the other two that you're unlikely to feel hard done by.

Veliki Brijuni is the largest and contains the vast majority of local treasures. Beautiful and vaguely surreal – English country estate meets Jurassic Park – it consists of hectares of well-maintained, green parkland surrounded by

the dazzling Adriatic and planted with avenues of prehistoric-looking pines. This is where you'll find a golf course, bird sanctuary, botanical gardens, zoo and safari park, three museums and the main archaeological sites. A map of the islands is posted at its harbour – including details of where to find the dinosaur footprints that dot the shoreline.

Brijuni had to wait until 1893 before it was rescued by Austrian steel magnate Paul Kupelwieser. He excavated Roman treasures, built villas, planted trees, landscaped gardens, built the first 18-hole golf course in continental Europe and even established a zoo. Kupelwieser had, in fact, created his own Xanadu – but he died in 1918.

Brijuni later passed into the hands of Mussolini's Italy. After World War II the Brijuni archipelago, along with the rest of Istria, became part of Tito's Yugoslavia. The Yugoslav leader used Brijuni as his base, conducting diplomacy with the Non-Aligned Movement and inviting the world's rich and famous to his idyllic playground. As you step onto Veliki Brijuni's quayside you are following in the footsteps of Haile Selassie, Queen Elizabeth II, JFK, Sophia Loren – anyone who was anyone in the 1960s. You can see them documented in the 'Josip Broz Tito On Brijuni' exhibition.

A tourist train pootles around the main island for you to see most of the attractions at one go.

The archipelago and surrounding waters were proclaimed a national park in 1983, served by a frequent shuttle boat from Pula 6km away.

→ np-brijuni.hr



Museum of Contemporary Art of Istria

www.ulysses.hr

ulysses
KAZALIŠTE THEATRE

19. Ulysses Theatre Festival

MALI I VELIKI BRIJUN

12.7. - 31.8.



Rovinj Top 20

Rovinj is Istria at its most chic, a scenic resort of quality restaurants and cocktail bars, galleries and boutiques.

1 Meet Old Masters and modern locals

Founded by a group of local artists in 1954, the Rovinj Heritage Museum houses Istria's prime collection of Italian art from the 1400s onwards. Renaissance gems by the great Venetian Giovanni Bellini and the school of Bonifazio de Pitati share second-floor space with Baroque painter such as Nicolò Grassi, Antonio Zanchi and Marco Ricci. One flight below is a floor of Croatian art from the later 20th century and there's also a section dedicated to Rovinj artists from the same period – some of whom would have helped set up this very museum. Summer sees

a flurry of temporary exhibitions by local artists – and also big international names and genres such as Picasso, Dalí, Chagall and Pop Art.
→ Trg maršala Tita 11 (052 816 720, muzej-rovinj.hr)

2 Do lunch by the pool

Ulika Rovinj is an upscale camping complex just outside Rovinj, a short walk from the beach. Here, from March to October, Barba Danilo is a gourmet corner that revives the restaurant the same family once ran before setting up this luxury lodging. Tables and chairs are ranged around the swimming



outdoor festival allows anyone to set up and sell their art. Among the amateur seascapes, you might find the odd gem.

4 Sink your teeth into steak

Opened in 2017, the Steakhouse & Pub Istriano doesn't beat around the bush. It serves steak, house-style thick and juicy, with simple trimmings such as grana padano cheese, rucola and potatoes. It's pretty serious about its beers, too, hosting its own Bavarian-style Oktoberfest, where litre-tall glasses are clinked over hearty portions of pork. The rest of the year, the menu changes weekly – steak is a constant, of course – which means that fish options alternate from tuna to bream. There's always a vegetarian choice, too, and often a little live music in the evenings.

→ Stjepana Radića (052 524 713, facebook.com/istrianoRv)

5 Sip champagne at Valentino

'A world of its own' is the motto of pricy Valentino, Rovinj's most celebrated drinker, opened way before the boom in Croatia – way before an independent Croatia itself, in fact, in 1989. Back then, the owners knew that Valentino's dramatic location, washed by the waves near Rovinj harbour, would bring results. Keeping things classic and old school, they gradually encouraged customers to plonk themselves



Batana

pool and a tasteful interior, where lunch (noon-2.30pm) consists of salads, light snacks and tapas, and dinner of Istrian classics given a contemporary twist. Wines and olive oils are immaculately sourced – then again, the family has had lots of practice.

→ Polari 5 (052 830 002, dn-rovinj.com)

3 Amble along Grisia

Always bustling in summer, stone-paved Grisia is a colourful thoroughfare of ateliers and artists' galleries that leads up to the Church of St Euphemia. Its role in the lively artistic life of Rovinj dates back to a first exhibition here in 1967 – 50th anniversary events took place in 2017. As well as paintings, mounted for display in doorways and on Grisia's stone walls, stalls proffer all kinds of artisanal artefacts. If you're here on the second Sunday in August, an



Rovinj Top 20

down on the rocky waterfront, offering brightly coloured cushions and ever more authentic – and expensive – mixed drinks. These days, Valentino is officially a ‘cocktail & champagne bar’, bubbly accounting for as much trade as bloody Marys. Step off the seaside street, lose the crowds and commune with nature, your cocktail and your companion.

→ Santa Croce 28 (052 830 683, valentino-rovinj.com)

6 Take a taxi boat to Sveti Andrija Island

Just off the coast of Rovinj, Sveti Andrija Island (also known as ‘Red Island’) is a handy and easy getaway from the crowds thanks to a boat that heads out from the town harbour every hour. This is, in fact, two islands in one, Sveti Andrija and Maškin. The larger Sveti Andrija was where Benedictine monks opened a church in the sixth century, rebuilt by the Franciscans 900 years later. After Napoleon chased them off, the island was pretty much deserted until the well-to-do Habsburg Hutterotts erected a family mansion and surrounded it with hundreds of plants and trees

from around the world – these you still see, and smell, today. The family mausoleum can also be visited. Most come here for the secluded beaches, though, backdropped by scented pine trees and facing clearer waters than found immediately around Rovinj itself. Although your boat over will invariably be crowded, it’s easy to find your own space for that real away-from-it-all feeling.

→ maistra.com/island-hotel-istra-rovinj

7 Discover a little culinary gem

Tucked in behind the marina, Segutra is one of those places that the first-time visitor may not stumble over but longer-term residents now swear by – and keep quiet about. Modestly small, with a scattering of tables outside, Segutra chalks up its specials on the board outside. The tuna, salmon, sardines and top-class white fish are grilled just right, the steak equally. Service and presentation are impeccable, the atmosphere informal – but there’s serious work going on in the kitchen. Open from Easter until October.

→ Vrata pod zidom 4 (052 812 004)



Monte Restaurant

8 Discover Rovinj history by rowboat

Batana House is perhaps the first multi-media museum around the Mediterranean specifically dedicated to a fishing boat. The vessel in question is the batana, the traditional wooden boat of this region. It is still very much in use today – as you will find out should you head out at sunset in a batana expertly rowed by the one of the museum staff. As both sit in the romantically lit batana, they will explain the importance of the boat to Rovinj’s history and economy, from the intricacies of night fishing to the construction of the vessel itself. If you’re here in daytime, the museum uses film, music and interactive exhibits to tell the same story – creative workshops allow you to try your hand at making fishing nets or plaiting demijohns.

→ Obala P. Budicina 2 (052 812 593, www.batana.org)

9 Admire brave St Euphemia

Thrown to the lions in AD303 though apparently mauled to death by a bear, poor St Euphemia is venerated in the Eastern Orthodox faith. How her relics came to be placed in a sarcophagus in Rovinj is not entirely clear – legend has it that her coffin washed ashore here, though other remains are still placed in the Church of St George in Istanbul, where she met her fate. The Rovinj church that bears her name, built in Baroque style in 1736, stands on the site of an earlier one also named after St George. Euphemia is represented in statue form, somewhat prosaically

converted into a weather vane, while the mural of her martyrdom feels more reverential, the pious saint soon to join the heavenly chorus as lions devour her limbs.

10 Go the whole seven courses at Monte

Shellfish, suckling pig and that day’s catch, the seven-course menu at recently Michelin-starred Monte takes in the bounty of Istria on land and sea. Closer to home, Dutch-Croatian restaurateurs Tjitske and Danijel Đekić raid nearby Rovinj market on a daily basis for the finest, freshest produce to supply the most versatile kitchen in town. There’s a five-course menu, too, and carefully conceived main-course options. There’s a choice from more than 100 wines to accompany. Set on a steep cobbled slope in Rovinj’s historic centre, considering the quality of fare on offer, Monte could be starched and stuffy but it’s anything but – all feels funky and informal, just the right combination for a relaxed, top-class dining experience.

→ Montalbano 75 (052 830 203, www.monte.hr)

11 Sail over to Sveta Katarina

The closest island to Rovinj harbour, Sveta Katarina was the playground of various counts and dukes in the Habsburg days, the forerunners of today’s pleasure seekers. The photos you may have seen of foolhardy tourists leaping from high rocks into the sea were taken here. More sedate holidaymakers make do with catching the frequent ferry over, wandering around the verdant pathways, past vineyards



Monte Mulini

and ancient olive trees, to find their own spot at a deserted and invariably rocky part of the coast. If you haven’t brought any refreshments, you’ll find the bar and restaurant open at the island’s namesake hotel, a family-focused resort complex with tennis courts, swimming pools and water sports.

→ maistra.com/island-hotel-katarina-rovinj

12 Spoil yourself on a gooey dessert

The first thing you notice when you walk into the Orange Bar, just in from Rovinj’s seafront, is its encyclopaedic dessert menu. Actually, that’s a complete lie. The very first you notice are the boats brimming with ice-cream concoctions, lavish sauces and little umbrellas being served to a nearby table – and, there being nothing worse than ice-cream envy, you just have to order the same. Presented in a tall glass, sundae bowl or dessert boats, the puddings here attract families all day long. Once the children have gone to bed, the grown-ups can come out and play, and lay into one of the fine cocktails that the Orange Bar is also known for.

→ Obala palih boraca 4 (facebook.com/pages/The-Orange-Bar)

13 Sample the wines at Villa Dobravac

A short taxi hop from the centre of Rovinj, the family estate of Villa Dobravac is where you’ll find comfortable accommodation with sea views, and an expertly stocked wine cellar containing six labels produced on-site. Fuga blends Merlot, Cabernet Franc and Cabernet

Sauvignon, while Toccata adds Teran to the mix. Tours and tastings are also laid on, as well as sampling of own-made olive oil and marmalade.

→ Karmelo 1 (052 813 006, villa-dobravac.com)

14 Stroll the Golden Cape

For serious, pine-forested beaches, head south of Rovinj, past the marina, to the wooded peninsula of Zlatni Rt, or Golden Cape. The stroll along the waterfront is a little more than a kilometre from town. There’s also a cluster of resorts around here, but they’re uphill, so the beaches are mostly undisturbed nature. Here shade-providing pine forests grow right up to the shore, ending in rocky beaches. You’ll need sandals to wade on the jagged shore, but the lack of sand means the sea is incredibly clear, great for snorkelling or diving. Walking further round, past Lone Bay, with its public changing cabins, smaller coves have shallow, calm waters ideally suited to paddling toddlers.

15 Sink Guinness and mingle with locals

The only ‘Irish Pub’ in town isn’t, really – but the Art Public Bar is a damn good local drinking institution nonetheless. The taps of Guinness and Kilkenny, and surprisingly wide range of Irish whiskeys, available allow management to place the sign ‘Irish Pub’ over the doorway, hence the confusion. Unplugged sessions towards the end of the week and DJ parties at weekends attract a regular local trade, and though tourists are most certainly

welcome, this is one bar where they don’t swamp the place.

→ Carrera 88A (091 519 1340, facebook.com/Art-Public-Bar)

16 Visit the Adriatic Titanic

Known as the Adriatic Titanic, the Baron Gautsch was a Habsburg passenger ship that hit a mine laid by the Austro-Hungarian navy off the coast of Istria at the start of World War I. Nearly 150 passengers and crew lost their lives and the ship sank to a depth of 35 metres. The wreck, discovered in 1958, now provides divers with one of Europe’s most fascinating sites, and a popular for trips from Rovinj. Based at the Hotel Istra on Sveti Andrija Island, the Dive Center Rubin offers escorted dives to the old ship, as well as courses for children and beginners.

→ Otok Sveti Andrija (052 802 540, rovinjdiving.com)

17 Dine amid contemporary architecture

Independent four-star hotel Arupinum has a restaurant of the same name, where fresh, seasonal ingredients are brought to the fore and home-made pasta is prominent. Given that warmer evenings and a larger influx of guests allow tables to be taken out and ranged around the pool, the whole ambience feels very Mediterranean, accentuated by the sleek, contemporary architecture that defines this recently opened establishment. All takes place just outside the centre of Rovinj, in an enclave of luxury lodging that also includes the stand-out Hotel Lone.

→ Luje Adamovića 29 (052 853 750, arupinum-rovinj.com)

Rovinj Top 20

18 Cycle the Limes Trail

A journey of nearly 40km, three-quarters of it on tarmac, the Limes Trail starts and ends at the Amarin Tourist Resort just north of Rovinj and takes three hours. The route takes you through Saline, Valalta, Rovinjsko Selo and Porton Biondi, through lovely landscapes and past several churches, St Martin’s viewpoint and the Maklavun archaeological site. Around Rovinjsko Selo, you should also notice the kažuni, a field shelter of dry stone walls, along with the pre-historic fortress of Turnina.

→ istria-bike.com

19 Splash out in style at Monte Mulini

Another Rovinj big hitter, Monte Mulini has five-star facilities to match its fabulous setting. All of the 99 rooms (including 14 suites) are fitted with jacuzzi-tub bathrooms and balconies overlooking a small open-air pool. The hotel brushes up to a rocky beach with natural shade, while a string of cove-like beaches run along one bay to the south. Sports facilities include four clay tennis courts, a basketball court and a bowling alley. A fabulous spa area and an indoor pool are shared with the next-door Hotel Lone. Med fusion dishes feature at the Mediterranean and Wine Vault restaurants.

→ A Smareglia 3 (052 800 250, maistra.com/hotel-monte-mulini-rovinj)

20 Try out Rovinj’s most ambitious eatery

Relatively new in the culinary stakes, Bookeria by prominent Trg Pignaton in Rovinj’s historic centre is nothing if not ambitious. At this prime location, it would be all too easy for this eatery – it feels too informal and laid-back to be called a restaurant, though it takes its cooking seriously – to fill the menu with the usual suspects and cash in. Not a bit of it. Here crabs and scallops feature prominently, such as the crab ravioli, and scallops in various sauces. The fish is fresh and accompanied by a sprinkling of spinach and pine nuts, rather than a dollop of the usual watery blitva. Great care is also taken over dessert, semifreddo or home-made ice cream. A sun-catching terrace completes the picture.

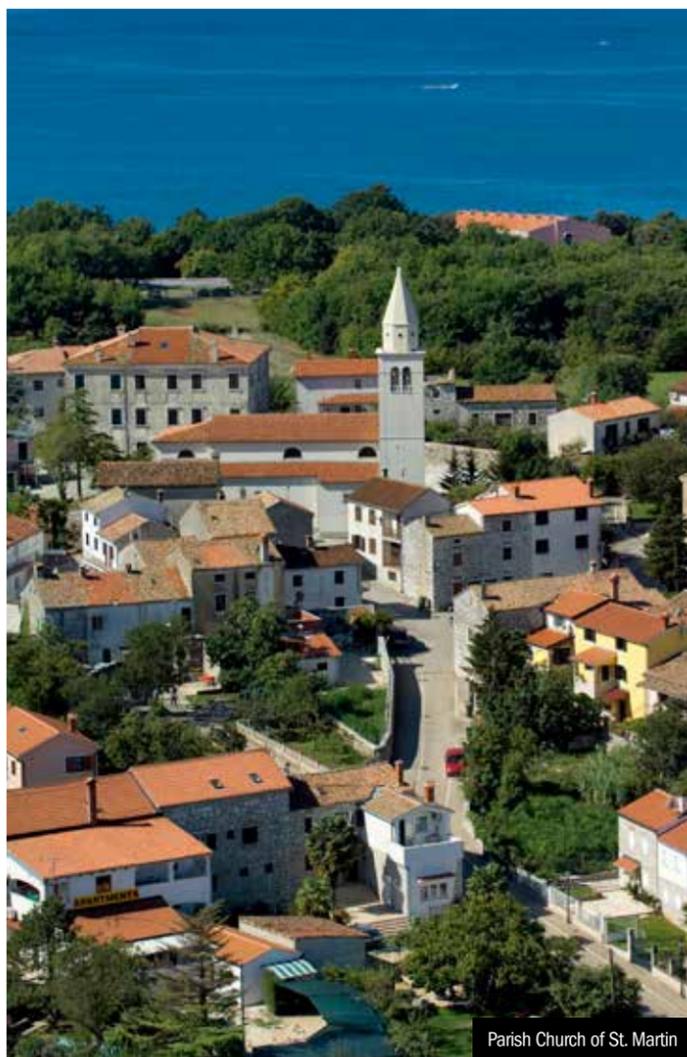
→ Trg Pignaton 7 (091 219 0007, facebook.com/bookeriarovinj)



St Euphemia

Vrsar, Funtana & Limski Canal

Travellers can visit the Limski kanal and its wealth of oysters before making their way to the pleasant towns of Funtana and Vrsar



Parish Church of St. Martin



Limski Canal

1 Have a memorable meal in a retro restaurant

Don't be put off by the 1970s exterior or the steep flight of steps leading up to this first-floor location. The Trošt is most probably the best restaurant in Vrsar. The large terrace has a wonderful view out over the harbour. Inside there are two dining areas. The smaller room has an open fireplace – employed in the cooking of some dishes – wooden beams and rustic walls. The second space is rather more formal, with sliding glass doors that open out onto the terrace in summer. The high quality of both the food and the service is happily accompanied by reasonable prices. Unsurprisingly, Željko Brajković's menu majors on fresh fish and seafood – house specialities include Istrian-style squid with polenta, grilled monkfish and fish baked with potatoes under hot ashes. Booking essential.
→ Obala Maršala Tita 1A (052 445 197, restoran-trost.hr)

2 Take a boat up the Limski Canal

Several companies offer boat tours of the fjord-like Limski Canal – perhaps the most visitor-friendly is the four-hour jaunt run by Rovinj-based Excursions Delfin. Setting off from Rovinj harbour at 1pm daily in high season, a pretty boat with a top deck for prime sightseeing takes four hours to explore the green waters of canal, with its steep, forested slopes and plentiful oyster beds. Much is made of the canal's piratical past – the boat makes a 20-minute stop in front of a cave thought to have been used by Captain Morgan himself. The trip finishes back in Rovinj.
→ excursion-delfin.com

3 Be at one with nature

Every summer without fail, thousands of tourists head for the large campsite at Koversada, between Vrsar and the Limski Canal. In itself, this is nothing unusual, only that everyone will then discard their

clothes and spend pretty much the entire holiday naked. This self-contained holiday 'town' is right on the beach and offers naturists all they could wish for. Istria has a long tradition of nudism but Koversada is the original and probably still the best resort. Its undisputable claim to fame is having been the one and only destination of its kind behind the Iron Curtain – Koversarda opened as far back as 1961. Its popularity remains undimmed. If you're in need of a little comfort as well, then Koversada also offers four-star, two-person apartments.
→ Koversada 1, Vrsar (052 800 200, maistracamping.com)

4 Enjoy a harbourside drink in Vrsar

Although the building is rather retro and the venue small, Nieves is Vrsar's focal bar in summer. Looking out over the harbourfront, with a couple of other cafés, ice-cream shops and eateries for company, it attracts families by day, and discerning

beer drinkers by night, now that Nieves has followed recent trends and begun stocking a number of more sought-after domestic ales rather than the ubiquitous Croatian lagers. At the height of high season, a couple of decent musicians will be bashing out a few blues and R&B tunes to give the evening a little swing.
→ Obala maršala Tita 23A, Vrsar (052 442 325, 091 5203 913)

5 Meet the Borisis

Originally from Bar in modern-day Montenegro, the Borisi clan moved up the Adriatic in the late 1500s to escape the Turks. Eventually settling in Funtana, they built the church that dominates the town centre today. Dating back to 1621, the Parish Church of St Bernard features a 34-metre-high tower, of classic white stone. Within, along with a 17th-century painting of Mary and child, are the tomb of one of the Borisi clan and the family coat of arms on a memorial plate.

Alongside stands the two-floor Villa Borisi, dating back a decade earlier, built by Borisi patriarch Bernardo, originally Renaissance, later augmented with Baroque touches. Kept in the family despite Count Borisi's later eight-year trial and conviction for murder, it passed into Habsburg, Italian then Yugoslav hands. Today it remains closed to the public.

6 Savour the freshest oysters

A modest shack stuck out on a jetty at this inland end of the Limski Canal houses a remarkable one-man operation. Offering some of the finest, freshest shellfish you'll find, its oysters a fraction of the price that you'd pay in Paris, Istrida aka Tony's Oyster Shack has been in business for more than 15 years. During this time, owner Emir Sošić has managed to develop his shellfish farm so that he now delivers to restaurants across Istria. Individual customers can still turn up on spec and pay a little over €1

for each divine oyster, flavoured with a touch of lemon. Emir also sells mussels by the kilo.
→ istrida.com

7 Visit an abandoned city

Settled by ancient Illyrians even before the Romans reached Istria, Dvigrad in the Lim Valley was considered important enough to have a pair of fortresses built there in medieval times, hence its name of 'Two Castles' ('Dvigrad'). This made it important enough to be sacked by various invaders, first the Genoese, then the Venetians and finally by Uskok pirates. Plague and malaria did the rest. By the early 1700s, the last citizens abandoned Dvigrad to its fate. Curious visitors 300 years later find ghostly remains and overgrown fortifications – although moves are afoot to preserve what's left.

8 Tour Vrsar in a semi-submarine

Moored in summer on the main waterfront Vrsar, this bright red semi-submarine is just that – a tourist-friendly vessel that half-submerges as it sets off from Obala maršala Tita, allowing those above to enjoy the sea views and those below to explore the life underwater. Large windows expose the darting fish and shy shellfish – the bottom of the craft reaches down to a depth of nearly 1.5 metres. After the tour is over, you come back to the same spot where you set off, facing the little island of Sveti Juraj beside Belvedere beach.
→ Obala maršala Tita 14, Vrsar (095 444 1040, semisubmarine-vrsar.com)

9 Take the kids to a dinosaur park

Just outside Funtana, Dino Park is the first of its kind in Croatia, a themed amusement park set in an old stone quarry, large enough to accommodate moving life-size dinosaur models. Around it are ranged all kinds of family-friendly entertainment, a children's train, a mini dinosaur-themed cinema, a pirate ship, a carousel, trampolines, a playground and a prehistoric workshop. A nature trail 1.5km long also gives visitors young and old an idea of what the dinosaur era was like – some of the most important prehistoric finds have been unearthed around

Istria. Along with the pony rides, dinosaur rides and circus performances, all attractions are free once you pay a one-off admission.

→ Istarska ulica, Funtana (052 4456 327, dinopark.hr)

10 Party at Casanova

Named after Vrsar's most notorious former resident, the Casanova Beach Club near Montraker has been the local party spot for many a year. And every year, it seems, the season lasts longer, with the 2018 big closing party taking place on September 28. Before that big shebang, from late April onwards, local DJs provide the dance sounds, bar staff mix decent, affordable cocktails and the beach and sunset do the rest. By day, have the kitchen fix you a pizza and spent the afternoon relaxing in a deckchair.

→ Vrsar (091 206 2987, facebook.com/casanova.beachbar)

11 Hop over to an uninhabited island

Facing directly opposite Vrsar, the island of Sveti Juraj was a hive of activity nearly 2,000 years ago. The stone quarry that once operated here supplied the materials for construction not only nearby, but as far away as Ravenna, historians now think. The Church of St George still standing in the middle of the island was built in the early days of Croatian culture, with a double-apse, as was the style of the time. Rather than left abandoned, the church was completely restored in the mid-1990s and is the scene of celebrations every April 23, St George's Day, when locals come over on fishing boats for this annual communal event. The rest of the year, the island is silent, but a modest fee should persuade a local fisherman to transport you over the short distance from Vrsar.

12 Dine like a Viking

In 1963, Hollywood superstar Richard Widmark and scores of extras in Viking helmets descended on the Limski Canal to film the swashbuckling big-screen movie *The Long Ships*. With this dramatic part of Istria standing in for the fjords of Scandinavia, the production saved the film company considerable expense



Oysters

being on location for six weeks in what was then Yugoslavia. It also allowed savvy locals to open a large-scale restaurant, Fjord. Still in operation today, this 250-seater features an open terrace overlooking the canal, shortly before it ends its journey a quarter of the way into the Istrian peninsula. Here, you can tuck into mussels cooked with garlic and white wine, or the oysters for which the Limski Canal is famous. The white fish is similarly excellent. Similarly, set back a little from the water's edge, the Viking restaurant also has uninterrupted views of Limski's green waters. Oysters are, understandably, the house speciality but the seasonal range of fresh shellfish is formidable. Particularly good is the lobster – served buzara style on a bed of pasta. Viking also specialises in white-fleshed sea-fish such as sea bass, dentex, John Dory, gilthead and grouper.

→ Fjord 052 448 222; Viking 052 448 119

13 Rent a boat and explore

Based at the marina that dominates the main seafront at Funtana, Istra Nautika has all kinds of boats for rental, with or without a skipper. Vessels run from a basic Reful and its 30-litre tank to a six-metre Barracuda SX, with a sundeck and shower cabin, which can accommodate up to seven people. A skipper is generally a good idea as he can point out landmarks such as Cape Grget, the uninhabited islet of Veli Školj and

the other smaller outcrops that dot this part of the Adriatic. You may also wish to plot up a less crowded beach, either towards Vrsar or Zelena in the opposite direction.

→ istra-nautika.com

14 Watch art in action

Every year, in the abandoned quarry of Montraker outside Vrsar, a unique arts project takes place. The Montraker International Sculpture School involves a gathering of students whose task is to transform lumps of stone into finely crafted works of art. In order to do this, they are instructed by tutors over the course of these three weeks in September. Members of the public can go and watch the sculptors in action, and see the progress they make. The best creations, including ones from the current summer batch, are then placed in prominent places around Vrsar, parks, squares and on the waterfront.

→ montraker.hr

15 Tuck into steak on a picturesque terrace

Under the ownership of Mario Fabrisa for the last 25 years, the Histria Da Mario on the main road that skirts Funtana shows the extent of Fabrisa's experience in the hospitality trade. A veteran of the Plava Laguna group in Poreč, Fabrisa opened this restaurant where a string of others now operates, so intense competition encourages

him to push the envelope as far as the menu is concerned. Steak Motovun-style with truffles, rabbit stew, spicy Istrian lasagne and, for vegetarians, mushroom lasagne, all differ from standard offerings. Platters might be the way to go, either for seafood or meat, carnivores particularly well catered for here. Quality Istrian wine, a Kozlović from Buje, say, may accompany. All takes place on an expansive, leafy terrace, with nearly three times more space than the comfortable interior put to good use if the evening turns chilly.

→ Istarska 22, Funtana (052 445 393, histria-damario.hr)

16 Knock back cocktails at Papillon

It may not be on the busy Vrsar waterfront but the trek up to Papillon, on the outskirts of the historic centre, is well worth the bother. Expertly mixed drinks are served with a smile and a little bowl of nibbles, as if due reward for making the effort up here. All the standards are here, mojitos, martinis and more, complemented by a decent range of Istrian wines and well chosen background music. There's plenty of terrace space and if it turns a little chilly later, a nice buzz around the bar inside.

→ Porečka 2, Vrsar (091 519 8404)

17 Discover an exceptional konoba

The word konoba, loosely translated as 'tavern', conjures up



images of a homely, family-run eatery, all rustic stone walls and wooden-beam ceilings, where a tourist-friendly menu plays safe and portions are huge. Just outside Funtana, on the main road to the Limski Canal, Konoba Bare ticks the boxes related to décor and ambience but where the food is concerned, it's a completely different level. Yes, you'll usually

still find Istrian boškarin beef, fish soup and fuži pasta twists with scampi and truffles, but the kitchen does a whole lot more with lamb, tuna and sea bass than its many of its more mainstream counterparts would elsewhere around Istria. Carpaccios, imaginative mare e monti pairings and ragus are created, embellished with spectacular

foams and sauces, and presented with due care on a stark white plate. Equally, desserts lend a 21st-century twist to tradition while wine is a strong suit, top whites and a fine selection of local Terans available. To round it off, prices have been kept within more than reasonable limits.

→ Kamenarija 4, Funtana (052 445 193, facebook.com/BareKonoba)

18 Start the day with quality coffee

The best spot for coffee in Vrsar, L'Angelique was forced to close for the 2018 season but is expected to be back in business by 2019. Opened in 2007, L'Angelique embodies a decade of dedication on the part of owner Tomislav Maslač, who sources his coffee beans, organic Arabica, directly from farms in Bolivia, the Galapagos and Ethiopia. Guests have a choice of two terraces, one by the front door, the other behind the belltower, while inside display the Gallic flair suggested by the venue name: a swirl of marble, a little abstract painting and delicious home-made cakes displayed under the glass. As the day wears on, cocktails, tap beers and local wines come into play.

→ Orlandova 47, Vrsar (098 957 0352, facebook.com/LAngelique-café-149085271805791)

19 Climb into an original MiG supersonic jet fighter

Between Vrsar and the Limski Canal, a collection featuring a Soviet MiG 21 jet fighter, an Antonov 2 and several Cessnas await with open cockpits on field by a small local airport. The Aeropark Vrsar allows visitors to clamber in and sit in the pilot's seat, with all the original instruments in the cabin. A guided tour in English of the hangar points out various military artefacts once used in aerial conflict, while a memorial honours the two Croatian airmen killed when Vrsar airport was hit by cluster bombs in 1991. The Aeropark operates from May to October, with group visits in winter, and also offers panoramic flights over Istria and skydiving on certain days.

→ 098 233 676, aeroparkvrsar.blogspot.com

20 Devour Vrsar's finest pizza

Vrsar has plenty of pizzerias to choose from but relaxed, family-run Fancita is regularly voted one of the top in Istria. Everyone's favourites are made with fresh ingredients and served in the main dining space of a large, roofed terrace that makes up for its lack of sea views. Inside the traditional wood-fired oven is the main draw. There's also a full menu featuring plenty of traditional Istrian dishes plus a good local wine list.

→ Dalmatinska 38, Vrsar (052 441 019, facebook.com/fancitavrsar)

Poreč Top 20

Poreč is a popular resort with Byzantine treasures and scores of restaurants, cafés and package hotels.



does give an idea of the lay-out of this seafaring settlement 2,000 years ago, and could probably do with some kind of visitor-friendly artist's impression or annotated diagram.

1 Enjoy an elegant repast

Overlooking bobbing catamarans and Sv Nikola island beyond, Divino is where diners are happy to pay that little bit more for that significant extra quality. Here the fillet of sea bass is stuffed with scampi and truffle mousse, the salmon is sprinkled with mustard seeds and the lobster is baked in Mediterranean herbs... and the duck breast comes with a Cointreau sauce, the foie gras is served with strawberry and red pepper, and prunes and bacon accompany the pork fillet. For all that, Divino is far from snobby, a children's menu for 'little gourmands' including spaghetti pomodoro – with fresh tomatoes, of course. Presentation is exquisite, service fitting with the surroundings.

→ Obala Maršala Tita 20 (052 453 030, divino.hr)

2 Stroll around a Roman forum

At the head of Decumanus, the main Roman road that bisects the outcrop of land that holds Poreč, Trg Marafor was the showcase square when the Emperor Augustus made this former fortified military camp a city in the first century AD. At that time, two temples stood here, one dedicated to Mars, the other to Neptune. Without the expanse or detail of the Roman forum in Pula, Trg Marafor requires a little imagination to conjure up images of toga-clad citizens strolling around it, chatting – the former temples are piles of undocumented rubble, with stubs of columns scattered around. The unkempt, balding grass on which they sit hardly adds to the experience. But, taken together with ever lively Decumanus, Trg Marafor



Aqua Colors Aquapark

3 Enjoy a quality meat-free meal

That rarity of rarities, a decent vegetarian (and vegan) restaurant deep in tourist central, Bistro Artha makes best use of its location – close to Poreč city market. The menu has plenty of options without forcing you to resort to pizza, and whatever you choose – pasta with truffles in a creamy sauce, say – you can accompany it with a tasty, fresh salad. The desserts are top-quality too, and a handy carrot to have if you're persuading the kids not to have hamburgers or chicken for once. Management puts a lot of love into the place, and it shows. Hibernates from December until March.

→ Jože Šurana 10 (052 435 495, facebook.com/bistroartha)

4 Splash about at Croatia's largest water park

With 13 waterslides, including the Looping Rocket, the Space Boat and the Magicone, two large pools, one with a half-hourly wave feature, and half a kilometre of

Lazy River, Aqua Colors Poreč offers a fun, family-friendly day out close to the Zelena tourist complex outside town. To one side are a children's playground with climbing frames, beach volleyball and another outdoor sports court, with competitions held at various points of the summer. Grown-ups can also order an on-site, whole-body massage. Opened in 2016, Aqua Colors is still finding its way in terms of other entertainment – an Animation Corner has been set up on the other side of the complex from the Sports Zone. Admission is structured in whole-day, six-hour and 210-minute price bands.

→ Molindrio 10 (052 219 671, aquacolors.eu)

5 Marvel at Byzantine architecture

No other man-made sight in Croatia is as stunning as the Euphrasian Basilica by the northern shore of the Poreč peninsula. It was here that the first Christians in the area worshipped – several places of worship, and a Roman villa, were built here before Bishop Euphrasius himself got to work in the mid 500s AD. The complex is quite extensive and you'll need at least a couple of hours to explore it, taking in the baptistry, the bell tower and what's left of the Bishop's Palace from where Euphrasius directed operations. And there's little doubt this is his work, the bishop having left his likenesses and inscriptions all over the strikingly bright mosaics around the Basilica. Glittering gold colouring and sparkling semi-precious gems all feature amid the sumptuous mosaics, a pristine example of Early Byzantine architecture. Construction is said to have taken ten years, though various elements, such as the 13th-century cimborium based on St Mark's in Venice, were added much later.

→ Eufrazijeva 22 (052 431 635, zupaporec.com)

6 Tuck into traditional family food

In a town developed for package tourism during the 1970s and 1980s, Hrast has been an independent and homely exception to menus with numbered photographs and one-time visits. Unveiled in 1971, its terrace with a perfect view of the historic centre of Poreč just around the bay, Hrast insists on producing as much as possible in-house. This includes the Istrian fuži pasta twists, the njoki dumplings, the cheese

ravioli and even the bread you'll be served – not to mention the Muscat wine and olive-oil cake, arancini riceballs and shrimp soup. Don't miss out, either, on the prawns in brandy or fish al forno. There's meat too – the veal medallions in red-wine sauce is recommended. Oh, and course, it's all family-run.

→ Nikole Tesle 13 (052 433 797, restoran-hrast.com)

7 Admire art in a Gothic palace

Right on Decumanus, on a prominent corner with Cardo Maximus, the Zuccato Palace retains its historic Gothic exterior, partly made from stone all the way from Korčula. The interior has been transformed into the Zuccato Gallery, the most radical and active on the local arts scene. Recent exhibitions have featured the works of Petra Grozaj, whose paintings have been shown in Zagreb, Berlin, Graz and Venice.

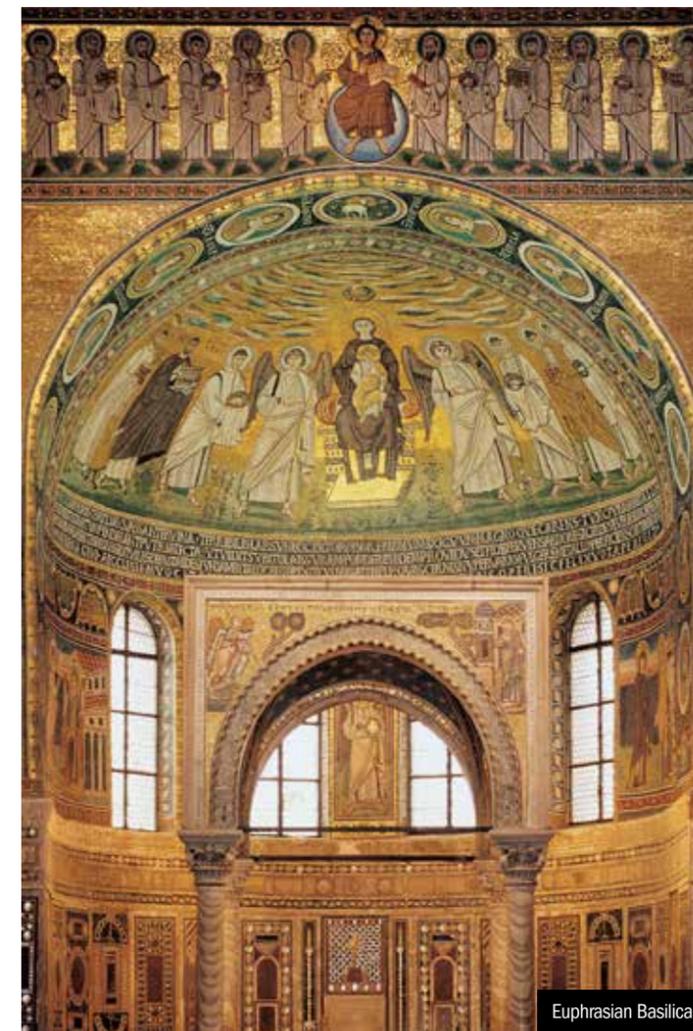
and conceptual artist Radomir Damnjanović Damnjan, whose solo shows across Europe date back to 1958.

→ Cardo Maximus (052 887 210)

8 Try then buy Istrian wines

Close to the Euphrasian Basilica on Eufrazijeva ulica, Bacchus is wine bar, eaterie and delicatessen all in one, all purveying authentic but affordable Istrian products. Malvazija, Muškatale and red Refošk are sold by the glass, allowing you sit outside on the rustic terrace on a pretty open courtyard. Family-made rakija grappas – honey-flavoured medica, biska from mistletoe and fig-based smokva – may also be sampled. Istrian platters of smoked hams, cheeses and olives can be shared among two or four people, and there are sardine, seafood and truffle versions too.

→ Eufrazijeva 10 (091 404 0051, bacchus-porec.hr)



Euphrasian Basilica

9 Watch art in action

Every year, in the abandoned quarry of Montraker outside Vrsar, close to Poreč, a unique arts project takes place. The Montraker International Sculpture School involves a gathering of students whose task is to transform lumps of stone into finely crafted works of art. In order to do this, they are instructed by tutors over the course of these three weeks in September. Members of the public can go and watch the sculptors in action, and see the progress they make. The best creations, including ones from the current summer batch, are then placed in prominent places around Vrsar, parks, squares and on the waterfront.

can pay by the hour for instruction and practice, with helmet and equipment thrown in for a few extra kunas. The Ski Lift station doubles up as a summer attraction even for those not taking part, as its bar and restaurant are popular hangouts. There's also beach volleyball, sand football and various other land-based games alongside. Ski Lift Poreč stays open from Easter to the middle of November.

→ Zelena Laguna (091 474 7714, skiliftporec.com)

11 Take in local history along Decumanus

As arrow straight as can be, as well as narrow and high-sided for much of its length the Roman thoroughfare of Decumanus is the spine of Poreč, packed to the gills in summer. Laid out east-west under Emperor Augustus in the first century AD, Decumanus runs from modern Trg Slobode to the former Roman forum of Trg Marafor, a distance of some 350-400 metres. As well as far too many ice-cream

parlours and souvenir shops, Decumanus is dotted with several historical curiosities, starting with medieval Peterokutna kula and its tower-top restaurant. Further along is the City Museum, with the atmospheric courtyard bar Lapidarium alongside. You then hit the major crossroads of Cardo Maximus, the north-south Roman thoroughfare, with the Gothic-tinged Zuccato Palace gallery on the corner, before passing the stand-alone Romanesque House, mainly two-storey structure dating back to the 1200s. By now, the landscape is more open, with occasional green spaces either side and pretty Baroque buildings more prominent, former homes of Venetian and Habsburg merchants. At the end, Trg Marafor is somewhat underwhelming, its twin Roman temples little but ruins, though you can walk round them for a full view of the Adriatic seafloor.

12 Polish off prime pljukanci

Thin, hand-rolled pasta perfect for tomato and seafood sauces, this preferred staple of Istria's northern coastline is best sampled at L'Insolito. A café opened by Andrea Darer in 2009, this terrace spot on a main square in central Poreč has since expanded into a full-blown restaurant where the speciality is pljukanci served with truffles and top-quality Istrian prosciutto, pršut. It's also great for pizza, the 50 seats outdoors ideal for the family or a group of travelling companions to share round the slices in the sunshine.

→ Narodni trg 3 (095 555 5535)

13 Dive from Brulo to Žontulo

In operation since the early 2000s, the Diving Centre Poreč offers both instruction and guided dives to sites around the area, as far as the Limski kanal and Rovinj. Beginners can start with a basic two-hour scuba session, culminating in a first sea dive, while those with slightly more experience can search for starfish and seafish in the shallow waters of Uvala Brulo on the doorstep. More seasoned divers then explore Žontulo, Frižital reef and around Sveti Nikola island. Diving Centre Poreč holds a special permit from the Croatian Ministry of Culture,

meaning that it can take the most experienced divers to the wreck of the Coriolanus, a Royal Navy trawler that sank with 40 men on 5th May 1945, two days before the German surrender was signed.

→ Brulo 4 (052 433 606, divingcenter-porec.com)

14 Boogie on the beach

If not the best nightclub in Poreč then certainly the most accessible and affordable, Saint and Sinner is both downtown club and beachfront lounge bar. The seafront venue down by the Zelena Laguna complex is a summer favourite, fun and unpretentious. You'll find name DJs elsewhere, here is just about dancing to mainstream tunes with a whole bunch of like-minded holidaymakers. There's little by way of heavy security and the cocktail makers are as entertaining as the DJs, spinning drinks and rapping with the customers. Relaxation is the name of the game here, with a bit of wild partying thrown in for good measure.

→ Obala Maršala Tita 12 (099 221 1811, facebook.com/saintsinnerporec)

15 Cycle the Parenzana

Built in 1902, left to rust after 1935, the Parenzana was a narrow-gauge rail that ran from Trieste, winding through the bucolic Istrian interior before terminating at Poreč. In those days, this was all Italy and Poreč was Parenzo, hence the name. Running for over 60 kilometres, it has gradually been revived, section by section, by local outdoor enthusiasts. Mostly, though, the Parenzana is patronised by cyclists and hikers, and regularly facilitated with improvements such as maps, benches, bike racks and service stations equipped with air pumps and repair kits. In September, it stages the three-day MTB Parenzana race, one of many events in a busy cycling calendar.

→ parenzana.net

16 Find quality seafood in an alleyway tavern

You might see the sign 'Konoba Aba' if you're heading along Eufrazijeva – but only if you were looking for it. Tucked down a passageway two paces across, this traditional Croatian tavern fills its stone interior and modest slice of terrace with



Decumanus

tables, upon which hefty portions of squid, langoustines, white fish and seafood pastas are placed. It's classic Adriatic stuff, blitva greens with almost everything – unless you're having grilled meat, in which case the chips are decent. Opt for the drinkable house wine and you won't find a much cheaper lunch in town.

→ Matka Vlačića 2 (052 438 669)

17 Sip cocktails in Roman ruins

Where once Roman citizens of Parentium strolled, shot the breeze and perhaps sipped wine, today holidaymakers sit and neck cocktails. Enclosed by ancient stone walls and overhanging foliage, Comitivm provides the perfect setting for evening drinks after a hard day's sightseeing or sunbathing. In a lovely garden amid the atmospheric ruins of Trg Marafor, classic mixed drinks are served, all the cocktail favourites include flavour of the month in these parts, Aperol spritz. If there happens to be a summer shower or Bura wind, tables inside are surrounded by a decor of marble and shiny wood. All is a touch more sophisticated than most spots around Poreč, without being noticeably more expensive.

→ Decumanus 15

18 Take in sunset with dolphins

One of many companies who provide boat trips from Poreč, family-run Victoria Tours offers a more unique excursion. Setting off from Poreč harbour at 6pm most evenings, Captain Bruno steers

the Victoria towards Rovinj and, in particular, the mouth of the Limski kanal. Here dolphins come to feed when the shipping lanes are much quieter. Although dolphin sighting is not guaranteed, given Bruno's vast experience in these waters, it's a more than likely occurrence. The tour also takes in this part of the Istrian coast – Funtana, Vrsar and the islands off Poreč before returning to harbour for 10.30pm.

→ Obala Maršala Tita (098 535 415, victoriatours-porec.com)

19 Eat out close to base

Running alongside the major hub of tourist hotels north of Poreč, Špadići is where you'll find the pretty, Italianate house and terrace that contain the friendly eatery Malu Poreč. Fine seafood, perfectly grilled fish, fresh greens and welcoming staff engender return custom, the quality pizzas meaning that it's a great option for young families too. Wines and olive oils are local and well sourced,



Poreč Diving Center

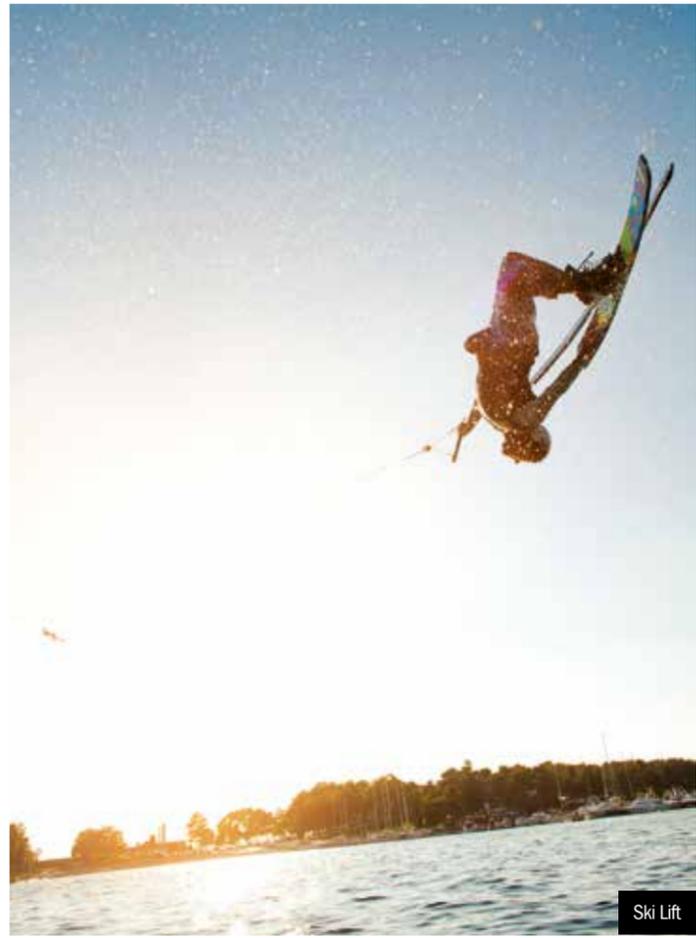
and excellent coffee finishes off a memorable meal – even occasionally a free shot of rakija.

→ Špadići 6 (091 452 2511)

20 Explore underground lakes

Halfway from Poreč to Višnjan, the Baredine Cave has been a major tourist attraction since opening to the public in 1995. Tours are advertised all over Poreč. You can travel here independently – there's a car park right outside – but all visits are guided ones, and take place every 30 minutes, in English among other languages. You're first led along a pathway 300 metres long before reaching 60 metres deep, where you find underground lakes and five otherworldly chambers filled with ancient stalactites and stalagmites. In the waters you should see the strange-looking olm, or European cave salamander, blind and pink, hence its alternative name of the human fish in Croatian. Given its appearance and habitat – it does everything underwater – the olm has been the subject of many a local legend. Tours last 40 minutes. Wear decent shoes, hold on to the railings when negotiating slippery stairs and be prepared for a fair climb back up.

→ Nova Vas (098 224 350, baredine.com)



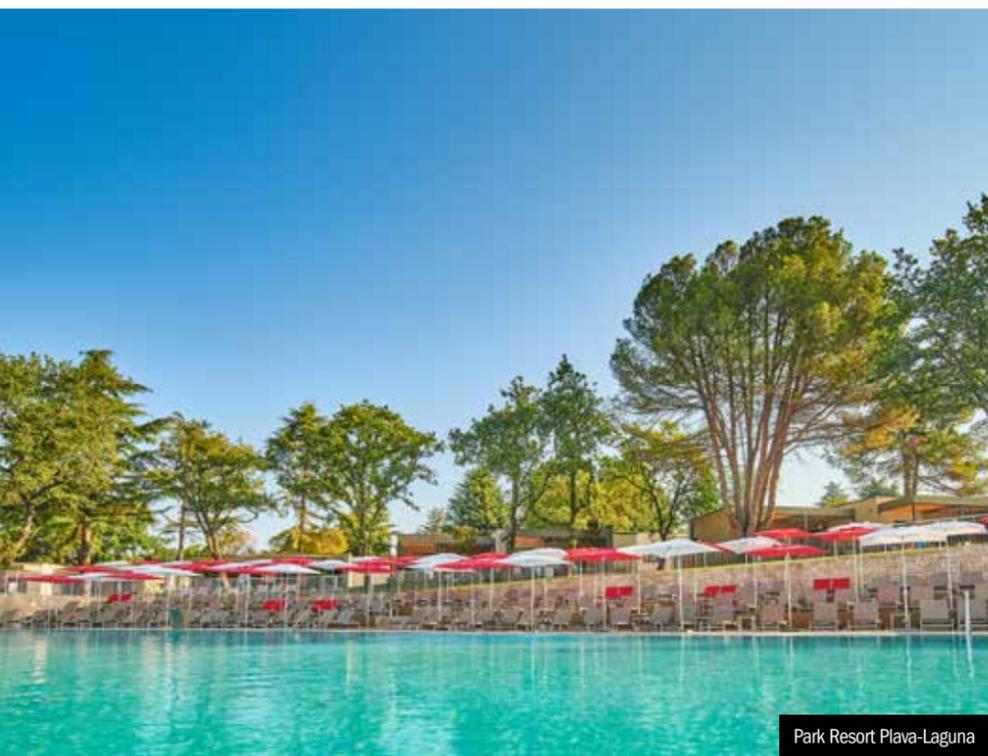
Ski Lift

Plava Laguna a 60-year-long tradition of unforgettable holidays in Istria

Plava Laguna has been creating extraordinary family holidays since 1957.



Villa Galijot



Park Resort Plava-Laguna

THE SEASIDE resorts of Umag and Poreč provide the perfect Mediterranean escape and deliver once in a lifetime moments, every day. For an unforgettable stay, choose one of their resorts, campsites, apartments and hotels – inspiring locations are the heart of the Plava Laguna experience.

Whether you're staying in one of the 5-star hotels or 2-star apartments, Plava Laguna's high standards of service are reflected in every moment of your stay. Dive into saltwater pools, enjoy your favourite ice cream, feel the excitement of paragliding over the Adriatic or dine luxuriously with friends below the stars. Plava Laguna's vacation playgrounds and friendly, attentive staff are here to make sure every day of your vacation is a happy one. In particular, Poreč and Umag are two Istrian treasures that shouldn't be missed while visiting the peninsula.

Beautiful beaches, fabulous nightlife and great food and wine are a given, but there are also beguiling stone towns, ecclesiastical attractions and wildlife to enjoy, so which to choose? Whether you're after a fun holiday with family, a romantic honeymoon or an action-packed weekend, there's sure to be an Istrian getaway to suit you. Not sure where to go? Discover your Istrian idyll with Plava Laguna.

UMAG

Croatia's tennis capital

Umag is famous for hosting Croatia's premier tennis tournament, the Plava Laguna ATP Croatia Open. Taking place right in the Stella Maris Resort, thousands of visitors flock to the resort and stay in the premium hotels, apartments, suites and luxurious villas placed within pretty, tree-lined boulevards just metres away from pine-shaded beaches. But Umag offers more than just spectator sports. Visitors take advantage of the tennis facilities available at the resort and at the Umag Tennis Academy, booking lessons with pros or simply playing among themselves.

Active Umag

Other activities include windsurfing, volleyball and diving. Cycling and jogging are popular pastimes which you can pursue at your own pace with 40 km of the Umag Riviera to explore, including a cycling and running path that starts in the centre and leads out to the magical Savudrija Lighthouse. Umag is a town where you'll never be stuck for things to do.

City breakers

Outside of its active appeal, guests enjoy spending their downtime strolling Umag's charmingly Italianate Old Town, its seaside promenade full of cute cafés and restaurants with views across the sea. The Church of the Assumption of Mary and St Peregrine on the town's main square is a must-see and for those wishing to dig a little deeper into Istrian history and culture, Umag offers a museum and several independent art galleries. Younger visitors always enjoy the town's Aquarium.



Stella Maris Resort



Hotel Sol Garden Istra

POREČ

Culture trip

Located in the middle of Istria's west coast, Poreč offers some of the region's most impressive historical sights, stunning natural beauty and everything you could want from a family holiday. In particular, the jaw-dropping sixth-century Euphrasian Basilica is the most important surviving example of Byzantine art in Croatia, the walls shimmering with gold-gilt and mother of pearl mosaics that still reflect the light as brightly as when they were first made (if you enjoy mosaics you should also catch the one located in the former Bishop's Palace). You can climb the complex's belfry for views of the Adriatic's wide, blue expanse.

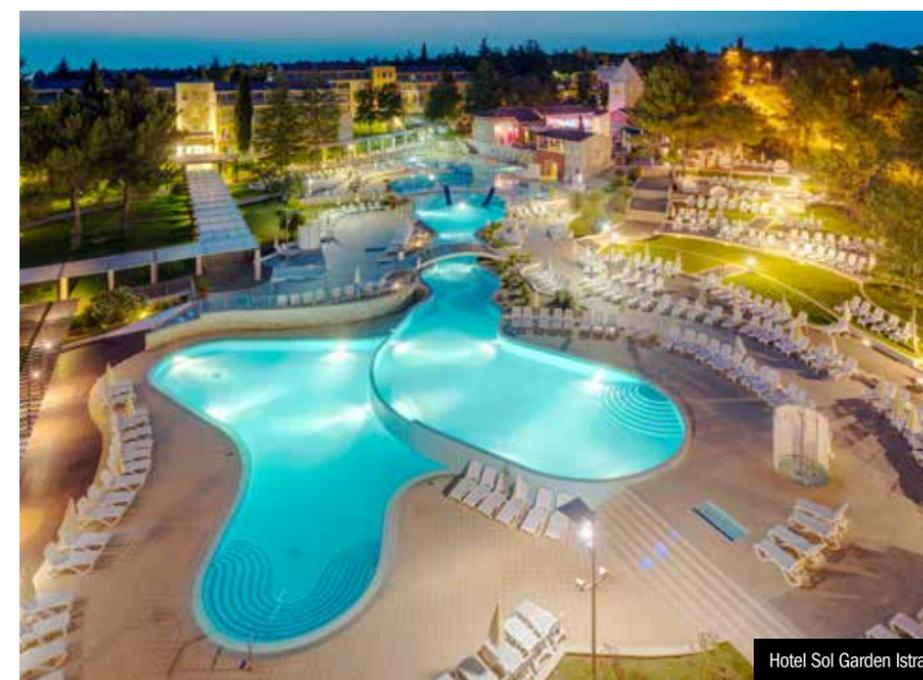
Wondrous wildlife

Just outside the town, the Baredine Cave is a spectacular series of underground lakes and chambers, filled with naturally sculpted stalactites and stalagmites. The expanse of pebble and rocky beaches around Plava Laguna's Zelena Resort offer a rugged, dramatic beauty with crystal-clear waters for bathing. Walkways follow the coast to both sides of town, some located near Plava Laguna sites.

Day-trippers

From Poreč, you can go anywhere in Istria. Only two hours from Venice by boat, it's also an easy hop over to Italy and a great place to embark on a day trip. But Poreč offers enough to keep anyone occupied by its marvellous beaches, food and ancient attractions - all within easy reach from over a dozen Plava Laguna properties.

→ Discover more at plavalaguna.com



Hotel Sol Garden Istra

Buje & Brtonigla Top 20

Brtonigla is a well-preserved village and a renowned gastro-enclave. Buje is home to Venetian palaces and medieval architecture.

1 Indulge in luxury at San Rocco

Its gourmet restaurant almost certainly the best in Istria, perhaps even Croatia, San Rocco is also a heritage hotel with personalised treatments at its spa centre, a large outdoor pool and 14 luxurious rooms, some with a hydro massage bath. Truffle, game and fresh-fish dishes are prepared with San Rocco's own extra virgin olive oil – the seasonal dégustation menu is the way to go, and if you're here in summer, you get to dine by the pool. Accompanying wines are well chosen, comprising a selection of some 200 labels. The restaurant is also open to non-residents, and

operates on midweek evenings between Tuesday and Thursday, and through the day between Friday and Sunday.

→ Srednja ulica 2, Brtonigla (052 725 000, san-rocco.hr).

2 Descend into the underworld

Accessible to any who can negotiate its steep stairs, Mramornica Cave sits between Nova Ves and Brtonigla, just off main road E751. Open from April to October, this long-visited attraction allows visitors to negotiate its long lit walkways by holding onto the railings as they go, with plenty of space above to



St Servulus Church, Buje

peasant's house, this collection of nearly 200 exhibits shows the tools, furniture and household items that a Buje local would have considered part of daily life a century or more ago. An olive-oil press and forge sit in the basement, while the kitchen above is not only functional but communal, for here the family would sit by the fireplace. A weaver's loom also features, as well as chests where clothes and precious items were kept. Occasional temporary exhibitions relate to the ethnographic and anthropological subject matter.

→ Trg Josipa Broza Tita 6, Buje (052 772 023)

4 Savour succulent slow-cooked fish

In operation since 1980, the Konoba Astarea can offer many memorable specialities, but none more memorable or more special than its dishes prepared pod pekom. This involves a slow, braising method, enhancing all moistures and flavours under a dome-like cooking bell, or peka. Usually a whole fish or lamb is the centrepiece, accompanied by potatoes and all kinds of vegetables. As if the atmosphere of the Astarea wasn't homely enough, with its old photos, piano and open fire where various dishes are also prepared, lending your meal a great smoky taste. Amiable chef/owner Anton Kernjuz will talk you through the day's menu, likely to



San Rocco Restaurant

the sides thanks to its dimensions several metres tall and wide. What is daunting, though, is when you gaze into the depths beyond the safety railing, and imagine what might be down those deep dark fathoms. In the main chamber, nature has given the dripstone red and white hues, the stalagmites rising to significant heights. Guided visits last 30 minutes. After your visit, you can pop into the Restoran Agroturizam Sterle next door for lunch – the restaurant not only looks after the running of the cave but keeps its Barrique wine barrels cool down there.

→ Stancija Drušković 20, Brtonigla (052 774 313, agroturizamsterle.hr)

3 See how generations of Istrians lived

If the Buje Ethnographic Museum is anything to go by, rural life in this part of Istria was extremely tough. Over four floors done out to look like a typical



Konoba Astarea

include sea bass, conger eel and sole. There are meat alternatives too, though here fish and seafood are the way to go, scampi buzara and grilled scallops also recommended. For dessert, apple strudel is another house speciality. → Ronkova 9, Brtonigla (052 774 384)

5 Pamper yourself at a luxury spa

Recently voted 'Wellness Hotel of the Year' in Croatia, the five-star Hotel Mulino on the Croatia-Slovenia border (literally!), a short drive north of Buje, attracts many visitors from either country keen on a weekend of Thalio treatments and relaxing in a Roman sauna. There's a Turkish bath and Finnish sauna too, plus pools indoor (with hydro massage) and out. Mulino is mainly known, however, as a casino hotel, with 20 gaming tables and 260 slot machines, a 24/7 world of bright lights and spinning wheels. Outside you will see Bonsai trees and olive trees from which they make our own excellent olive oil. → Škrile 75A, Plovanija (052 725 300, mulino.hr)

6 Hike along the Mirna river

Leading from Nova Vas, near Brtonigla, a tarmac track runs all the way to the Škarline Nature Park. Here the pretty river Mirna, Istria's longest, twists and turns through verdant slopes, perfect hiking country. Škarline itself is one of the streams that feeds into it, its waters pure and lime-coloured, reflecting the ample greenery that provides welcome shade in summer. Bridges and cascades also feature, and make sure to pack supplies to set up a picnic at one of several designed spots.

7 Tour a top winery

Nine different tours are offered at the renowned Kozlović winery, north-east of Buje past Momjan. A family business since 1904, the current Kozlović operation consists of two expansive vineyard areas, one at Valle by the main site, the other, Santa Lucia near Buje. Here Teran, Malvazia, Muškat Momjanski and other indigenous varieties are cultivated and hand-picked every harvest, available for sampling as part of a guided visit. Year-round tours include a two-hour presentation, partly in the old cellar from 1904, with finger food, and a one-hour sampling of classic Istrian wines, grappas and

olive oils in the company's smart wine bar. In summer, you can opt for a private rooftop dinner à deux, with wine, timed just before sunset, or a picnic at the Santa Lucia vineyard. → Vale 78, Momjan (052 779 177, kozlovic.hr)

8 Dine in plain countryside

One of the best, if not the best, countryside restaurants, Konoba Morgan is easy to find – if you're one of the many Italian regulars who beat a path to its door at weekends. For first-time visitors, it's not that well signposted – to reach it, take the main road out of Buje, then a track on the left-hand side a kilometre before Brtonigla. Make sure to book a table first, though, ideally on the large covered terrace with a view of the vines. Owner Marko Morgan lets locally sourced ingredients and attention to detail take centre stage, to produce simple dishes based on authentic recipes. The business involves the whole family: Morgan senior hunts for game, his mother and sister work in the kitchen. There's no fixed menu; Morgan relays to customers what is available that day and invites them to take an aperitif. Time-tested specialities are based on the season – homemade polenta with game perhaps or slow-cooked and marinated boškarin ox. → Bracanjia 1, Buje (052 774 520, konobamorgan.eu).

9 Soak in a beer spa

A cult beer for a decade or more, San Servolo has put the profits to good use, not by opening yet another craft-ale bar, but by creating a boutique hotel and beer spa just outside Buje. Along with contemporary, four-star lodgings, you can soak away your aches and pains in a beer bath. The treatment lasts for 45 minutes and also includes use of a heated indoor pool, Finnish and Turkish saunas, and the gym. The steakhouse features the finest Istrian boškarin ox, lamb and prosciutto, partaken with a full view of the surrounding Istrian countryside. → Momjanska 7, Buje (052 772 505, sanservoloresort.com)

10 Sample local Muscat

Momjan is the historic heartland of Muscat wine. Golden in colour, Muškat Momjanski has been produced in and around this hilltop village near Buje for centuries. A particularly fine accompaniment for dessert, this local variety is celebrated every November for the fortnight-long Muscat and Truffle Days gastronomic festival in Momjan. Year-round, wineries such as Kozlović lay on tours and sampling sessions for visitors

11 Observe art in a medieval tower

Built by the Venetians in the 1400s, St Martin's Tower is all that remains of Buje's fortifications, the rest of the stronghold otherwise abandoned or destroyed. Itself on the point of collapse, this pentagonal landmark was given a complete renovation in 2015 and now is not only safe to walk around in, but entertaining, too. Amid brickwork nearly 600 years old, art exhibitions are displayed, taken advantage of the tower's atmospheric surroundings and ideal location.

12 Hang out with the beautiful people at Gecco

Gecco Beach Club is more than just another waterfront spot with a few mixed drinks and DJ tunes. Here, at the lesser-known resort of Karigador, a short drive from Brtonigla, you can start the day with sunrise yoga, try your hand at a little beach volleyball before settling down to lunch, perhaps some miso soup, pad Thai noodles, or spicy tom yum. The afternoon can be given over to swimming and sunbathing, before it's time for an aperitif, and maybe a cocktail or two. By sunset, DJs are in full swing. Operating daily until 2am for six months of the year, Gecco is best known for its



Brtonigla

Sunday champagne brunches, a popular feature on this part of the Istrian coastline. → Karigador 74B (091 919 4900, gecco.pro)

13 Combine a gallery visit with a picnic

Though born in Zagreb, renowned sculptor Aleksandar Rukavina was rooted to Istria, living and working here for the last 25 years of his life before he passed away in 1985. His memorial gallery in bucolic Brtonigla is not only filled with 47 of his works in wood, stone and bronze, but is set in a shaded park, where you can spread out the picnic blanket after you finish at the museum. Rukavina taught art in Buje and Brtonigla, initiated many cultural projects and was dedicated to restoring neglected Istrian villages to their former glory. Peasants, and soldiers, feature heavily in the works on view at the gallery. → Aleksandra Rukavine 9, Brtonigla (052 774 307)

14 Visit a farm and have lunch

Just off the main road to Buje, the village-based family operation Konoba Nono is both farm and eatery. First and foremost, it's an ideal place to tuck in to the rural Istrian repertoire of home-made pasta, meats baked under a hot metal lid (including goat), and goulash made from boškarin, the local horned cattle. The wine list runs from an unpretentious house white to the best of local small winery

production. Modern dining rooms feature rustic implements and old musical instruments. Meanwhile, alongside, the kids can visit the owners' farm, with its donkeys, sheep, geese, ducks, chickens and rabbits. → Umaška 35, Petrovlja (052 740 160, konoba-nono.com)

15 Visit the Lourdes of Istria

France has Lourdes, where peasant girl Bernadette Soubirous saw her visions in 1858 – Istria has Radini. In this pretty village between Brtonigla, Karigador and the Adriatic, a certain Marina Pirović also saw the Virgin Mary, in 1922, and eventually persuaded the powerful local Radin family to assist her in building a church as a result of this miracle. Providing a small plot by the main square, and stone from their own quarry, the Radins enlisted the help of many volunteers to construct Marina's church. The huge altar would be designed in the same shape as the cave at Lourdes where the famous visions took place. Sure enough, in July 1929, the church was ready, opened and consecrated – and every July since, greets local worshippers who gather for a special Mass and ceremony to honour Our Lady of Lourdes.

16 Buy top truffles

The Buje outlet of the legendary Zigante brand is one of half-a-dozen stores across Istria and Slovenia,

ample proof of the success of this Livade-based operation. In the late 1990s, a certain Giancarlo Zigante and his dog Diana found the largest white truffle in history, a discovery that led to a destination restaurant, a large processing and canning factory, and all kinds of offshoots. Cornering the market in truffle dining, Zigante is a significant local industry based around this forest fungus. At this store, truffles come in all forms, black, white, in honey, in olive oil, in cheese, in dark chocolate and in jam. The latest brand-stretcher? Truffle crisps.

→ Trg Josipa Broza Tita 10, Buje (052 772 125, zigantetartufi.com)

17 Dine in a historic distillery

One of those places that's highly regarded by locals and well worth driving a few extra kilometres to find, the Stari Podrum is situated in an old red-brick distillery in Momjan, a wine-producing village just north-east of Buje. The food is as off-the-beaten-track as the location, with an informal follow-the-staff-suggestions menu that changes seasonally according to what's fresh. Expect good home cooking with home-made pasta, soups and stews garnished with truffles, asparagus and other regional riches. Be sure to stay for the seasonal fruit desserts, washed down with the local Muscat. → Most 52, Merišće, Momjan (052 779 152, stariopodrum.info)

18 Admire the works of Venetian master craftsmen

Visit the Church of San Rocco in Venice or magnificent Cathedral of St George in Ferrara, and you will see the works of master sculptor Giovanni Marchiori. Here in Istria, too, are masterpieces by Marchiori, carved from famed Carrara marble: the statues of St Sebastian and St Servulus, after whom the main church in the centre of Buje is named. Built on the site of its Gothic-Romanesque predecessor from the 1200s, this late Baroque landmark contains an organ created by Gaetano Callido. One of 430 he is said to have constructed, found in a dozen churches around Venice, this one dates back to 1791.

19 Pick up quality olive oil

The red, grey and black soils in this part of Istria lend themselves to the cultivation of olives – which is where the Buršić family comes in. Based Nova Vas, near Brtonigla, this dynamic operation produces five types of olive oil, De Kleva created from five types of olives, Buza with balsamic undertones, Istrian Bjelica to go with mature cheeses, Leccino for seafood and Pendolino to accompany pasta. All are extra virgin, and all are available at this homely outlet. → Nova Vas 102 (052 774 102, bursic.net)

20 Explore a ruined castle

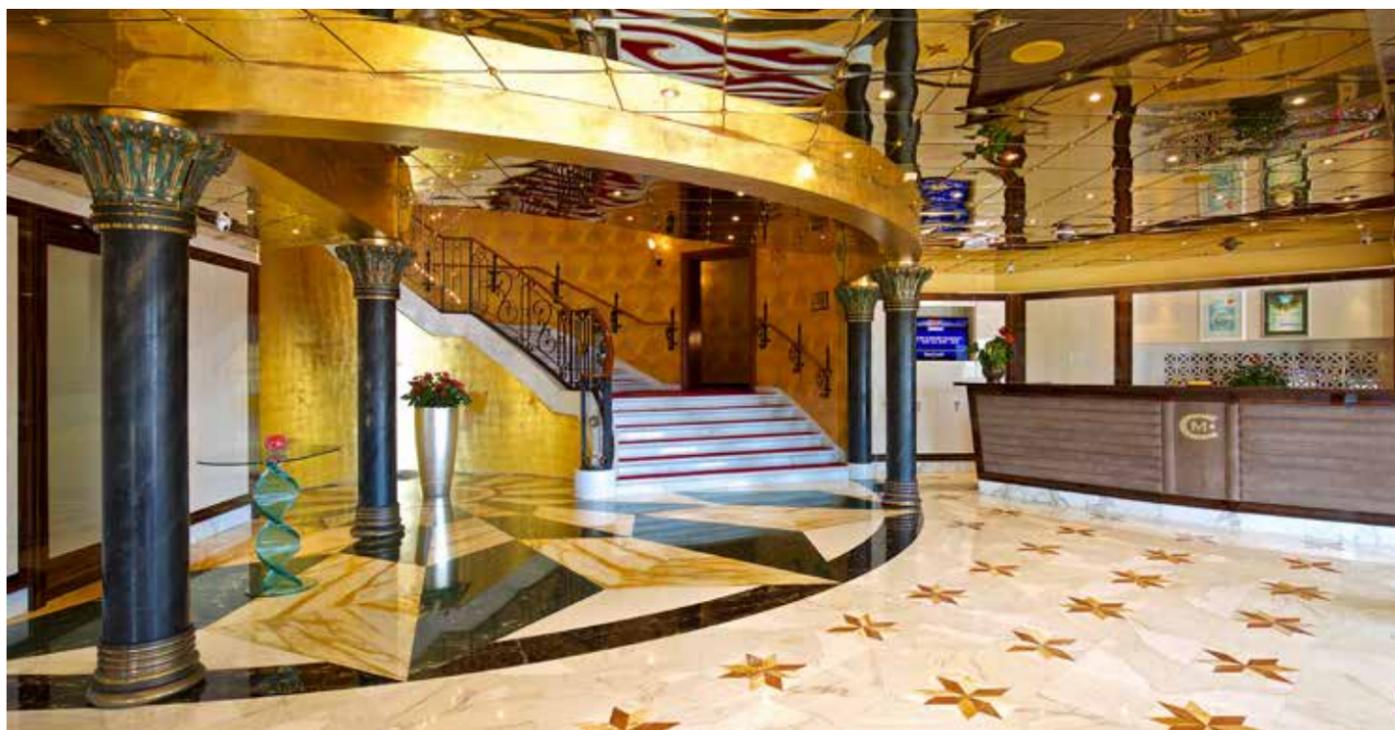
Perhaps hard to believe now, but the modest village of Momjan, population around 300, was once a major seat of powerful medieval dynasties. With its vantage point overlooking the Dragonja river, which today forms the border between Croatia and Slovenia, Momjan was fought over by the surrounding nobility, the Devins, the Counts of Gorizia and the Patriarchs of Aquileia. Eventually, in 1548, it was purchased by one Simone Rota of Bergamo, and remained the family's main place of residence here for nearly 300 years. A chapel and stone bridge were built and the former fortification was adapted for domestic purposes. Once the Rotas moved out, in 1835, the building was left to be conquered by ivy and undergrowth. Still abandoned nearly 200 years later, it remains a ghostly ruin, its one tower evidence of Momjan's former status, its remains too dilapidated to be reconstructed.



Hotel San Rocco

The pleasure of luxury

Recently voted 'Wellness Hotel of the Year' in Croatia, the five-star Casino Hotel Mulino on the Croatia-Slovenia border, a short drive north of Buje in Istria, attracts visitors from all over Europe seeking luxury and high-end spa treatments.



RECENTLY voted 'Wellness Hotel of the Year' in Croatia, the five-star Casino Hotel Mulino lies at the very start of Istria, next to the Croatia-Slovenia border, a short drive north of Buje. It attracts visitors from all over Europe seeking luxury and high-end spa treatments.

The surroundings could not be more tranquil. On the slopes overlooking the beautiful Gulf of Piran out in the Adriatic, the Casino Hotel Mulino overlooks a UNESCO-protected Nature Park. Vineyards, olive groves, orchards and historic hilltop Istrian hamlets line the landscape, the Mediterranean climate mild and forgiving, wine cultivation and farm production the main activities in this unspoiled north-west corner of Istria with generations of Italian influence on cuisine and architecture.

The design of the Casino Hotel Mulino itself, while gleaming and contemporary, echoes the elegance of this timeless environment.

Here, 67 beautiful guestrooms and luxury suites provide visitors with all they need for a relaxing getaway and come in seven categories: Presidential Suite, Suite de Luxe, Mulino Junior Suite Blue, Mulino Junior Suite Red, Junior Suite, Double de Luxe and Single de Luxe.

From a roomy 36 square metres to a mammoth 84, space is a given. Also universal are king-sized beds, veined marble bathrooms with underfloor heating, LED HD TVs, ultrafast WiFi, remote-controlled electronic curtains, bathtubs, bathrobes, slippers, 24-hour room service and a range of exclusive natural cosmetic products in each bathroom. Striking artworks feature throughout.

Some of the Double de Luxe rooms have been adapted for access for guests with reduced mobility.

Exclusive customers staying in the Presidential Suite and Suite de Luxe have their own whirlpool while sea views can also be enjoyed by those in the Mulino Junior Suite Blue. Guests in the Mulino Junior Suite Red look out over a verdant expanse of the nature park.

At guests' disposal, from noon until 1am every day of the week, are the Restaurant Mulino and Restaurant Tropicana. With glittering crystal and silverware, an exclusive ambience envelops sophisticated diners treated to Mediterranean cuisine and Istrian delicacies in the à la carte Restaurant Mulino. Like all of our ingredients, the truffles, seafood, succulent meat and seasonal produce are the freshest of the fresh, sourced locally and used as the cornerstones of the gastronomy on offer here. Those booking the refined Restaurant Tropicana can tuck into fine regional fare in intimate surroundings, with family, friends and business clients, backdropped by views of the Sečovlje salt pans and the Nature Park. Linger in the restaurants after your meal and savour both the view and the glorious taste of our wines; we have over 800 bottles of the greatest brands and varieties to choose from.

As with the rest of the uncrowded complex, peace, tranquillity and soft lighting imbue the extensive Prestige Wellness & Spa, 1,500 square metres given over to health, relaxation and beautification. Centrepieced by a kidney-shaped pool with hydro-massage jets, a Turkish bath, Roman sauna and Finnish sauna allow you to let yourself drift away in the lap of warming



luxury. Surrounded by snug loungers, with emotion showers and a help-yourself selection of fruit, soft drinks and special teas, guests may also take advantage of the panoramic pool outside and well-equipped gym.

Those keen on extra pampering can book a massage or beautification treatment using exclusive Guinot, Thalion or Natura Bisse products.

The Casino Hotel Mulino is, naturally, also a casino, with 20 gaming tables and 260 slot machines, a 24/7 world of bright lights and spinning wheels. As well as American roulette, you can try your luck at punto banco, Texas hold'em, blackjack, Russian poker and Mulino's own hold'em poker. Outside you will see Bonsai trees and olive trees from which they make our own excellent olive oil.

For those opting to fly here, there's a major international airport at Trieste a short drive away as well as Pula and Venice airports within easy reach.

→ Casino Hotel Mulino Škrile 75A, Plovanija (052 725 300, mulino.hr)



Labin & Rabac Top 20

The only major town on Istria's wild east coast, Labin is strong on culture while Rabac provides the summer fun.

1 Wander around 2,000 years of history

In the Baroque Battiala-Lazzarini palace dating back to the late 1600s, the Labin City Museum takes you on a journey of 2,000 years. Starting with the atrium display of Roman tombstones and monuments from the first to the third centuries – note the mention of 'Respublica Albonessium' on one dating back to 245 AD – the permanent exhibition covers the Venetian, Napoleonic and Habsburg periods. A user-friendly chronological overview includes interactive features, a replica of a local coalmine and documentation

in English. There's particular focus on the miners' strike of 1921, World War II and the modern-day annual cultural happening of Labin Art Republic.

→ 1. svibnja 6, Labin (052 852 477, hvm.mdc.hr)

2 Dine with a magnificent view

A superb panorama of the Kvarner Bay, all the way out to the island of Cres, is not the only reason to visit revered Restaurant Kvarner – but all the same you'll want to find a table on the 60-person terrace. The Istrian specialities here would be worth the visit whatever the view. Pride of place goes to the



Church of Blessed Virgin Mary's Birth, Labin

krafi, ravioli-shaped pasta sweetened with raisins, rum and sugar and stuffed with four types of local cheese. Fuži pasta twists with beef – dry-aged meat is another speciality – and gnocchi with wild boar can also be recommended. Much of the produce is sourced locally, including the divine olive oil and wine. Don't worry if you linger longer than expected – the management also looks after four guestrooms in Labin and four in Rabac.

→ Šetalište San Marco, Labin (052 852 336, kvarnerlabin.com)

3 Visit a church gallery

It was Pula-born painter Vinko Šaina who hit upon the idea of reviving the tiny Church of Our Lady of Mount Carmel,

halfway up an incline on a steep Labin street, by converting into an art gallery. That was back in 1991. After two years of painstaking repair and restoration, working alongside experts in architectural heritage, Šaina was able to open the Galerija Alvona, one of the most prominent in eastern Istria. Certainly, it has since hosted some 100 exhibitions by mainly, but not exclusively, Croatian artists, as well as collaborations from nearby Italy and Austria. Although the Alvona does not insist on a specific artistic direction, exhibitions have to work around a tight space of five by six metres, albeit one equipped with gallery lighting.

→ G. Martinuzzi 15, Labin (052 852 082, galerija-alvona.hr)

4 Meet a friend of Martin Luther

Controversial German cleric Martin Luther, whose teachings divided Christianity in the early 1500s, had many followers. One of the most notable was Labin-born Matthias Flacius Illyricus, whose writings are kept as part of a unique collection in palatial surroundings by the Labin City Museum. Visitors may admire the dense, erudite volumes in Latin, revolutionary at the time, in the house where this Protestant writer and professor of theology grew up. This memorial collection has longer opening hours in high season.

→ Giuseppina Martinuzzi 7, Labin (052 852 477, flacius.org)

5 Follow the asparagus trail

The lesser-known smaller settlements of Plomin, Kršan, Vozilići and Potpićan lie north of Labin and Rabac, close to the tip of Kvarner. Hilltop Plomin is particularly picturesque, overlooking a channel that cuts into Istria's east coast. Every spring, key restaurants in these communities take advantage of the plethora of wild asparagus that grows naturally in the verdant surroundings. Each prepares special dishes, but most will offer the local favourite, asparagus omelette. Establishments include the Konoba Stare Staze in Kršan, the Tri Murve in Vozilići and the Dorina in Plomin.

8 Discover the great outdoors

Cutting across the bucolic countryside surrounding Labin are a number of hiking and cycling trails, named after a certain landmark or legend. Each has a specific length, degree of difficulty and GPS coding to help you along the way and plan your day. A trail could be 15km long, the Bellavista, say, taking between four and five hours by bike – or under 4km, the St Florentius, a nice half-hour jaunt. Outdoor activities are not limited to the land – in addition, there's diving at the Girandella centre, sea kayaking through Four Elements, both Rabac-based, and plenty of nearby opportunities for SUP and sailing.

→ istria-trails.com; girandella-diving.com; fourelements.com.hr



Labin

6 Discover Labin at night

Thanks to a popular initiative, visitors to Labin between mid-June and mid-September can enjoy a free five-language sightseeing tour of the town, led by a local guide. Medieval secrets and legends, the mining industry and the legacy of the Labin Republic are explained as the group is taken round the streets, sights and Baroque palaces of the historic centre. Tours take place every Tuesday in summer, between 9.30pm and 11pm, bookended by sampling of local produce at the Art Gastro Gallery at the Palazzo Negri.

→ rabac-labin.com

7 Savour sea bass on Tito Square

Its prominent, two-storey façade sat on Titov trg – yes, Labin still has a Titov trg – Velo Kafe is one of those places that is all things to all men. Three venues fill this Italianate building, all of them busy, all year round. On an upper floor with a view of the main square, a comfortable, half-trendy, half-rustic restaurant boasts glowing terracotta walls, plenty of artwork and a traditional open fire in winter. The food is typical Istrian with plenty of maritime options, not least the sea bass in a sauce of capers, olives and white wine, and outstanding Kvarner prawns. The café and its terrace throng in summer while a nightclub offers rock music to regulars.

→ Titov trg 12, Labin (052 852 745, velokafe.com)



Gradska Galerija

so the whole dining experience can be enjoyed outdoors or near a warming fireplace indoors in winter.

→ Rogočana 1 (052 852 576, konobarogocana.com)

11 Relive Raša's mining history

There's nothing quite like Raša – certainly not in Croatia. A former mining community whose feisty strike in 1921 gave rise to the so-called Labin Republic, Raša was deliberately chosen by Il Duce to site his model new town in what was then Italian-occupied territory. This classic architecture of the time remains in place, while Raša has since rediscovered its industrial heritage. By using video projections and sound effects, the Museum of Mining at the Arsia Centre evokes the authentic experience of how life was for those who worked here. There are even the original rail tracks and a mock-up of the typical modest lodging where a miner and his family used to live. The whole attraction has also been adapted to accommodate visitors with limited mobility.

→ Trg Republike, Raša

12 Admire four decades of modern sculpture

Just outside Labin, once part of the estate of local nobles, Dubrova Sculpture Park displays the works created by the summer Mediterranean Sculpture Symposium here. Short-term residencies were offered to select, mainly European, sculptors, who in turn left their works as part of the landscape. Free to enter, the sculpture park by the entrance to Labin now contains around 100 examples carved from durable Istrian stone. Look out for pieces such as King & Queen by Zvonimir Kamenar and The Breakthrough by Slovak artist Jozef Janković, whose work was exhibited at the Tate in London in 2015.

13 Find buried treasure in Kranjci

Local legend has it that the first church in what is today the village of Kranjci was built by Greeks in Byzantine times. After accumulating much wealth, they were struck by a terrible drought, hunger forcing them to leave. They packed all their gold in a small chariot, which proved

too heavy to move. Part of it, the legend continues, was placed in a cauldron and buried near the Church of St Florentius, with a secret vow. They never returned for the gold, and the vow went with them. What we do know is that the church that centrepieces the village dates back to around 550 AD and was built in Romanesque style. It gained its patron saint 700 years later, perhaps no coincidence that Florentius guards against terrible storms and low crop yields. The walk from Labin to Kranjci is along a bucolic trail of around three kilometres – look out for buried treasure on the way.

14 Take a culinary trek to Trget

Trget, ranged around a beautiful bay south of Labin, is one of those authentic fishing villages that have long disappeared from much of the Mediterranean. Set at the mouth of the River Raša, it would attract few visitors – in fact, it has no lodging to accommodate any – were it not for a fabulous little fish restaurant, Martin Pescador. Fishing skiffs bob below the terrace, where the lap of the water gently competes for your attention. That is, until the food arrives, the fresh crab, calamari, spaghetti vongole, accompanied by a crisp Malvasia. If dining inside, you'll be surrounded by maritime knickknacks, the drinks served from a rowing boat. Traditional furnishings encompass a fireplace that comes into its own in winter.

→ Trget 20 (052 544 976)

15 Take the kids to an aquapark

More soft play in the water than high-tech rides, nevertheless the two Aqua Fun sites in Rabac, at Maslinica beach and at the Valamar Girandella Resort on the other side of the headland, provide active entertainment all day long in summer. Slides, towers, climbing frames and tubes allow kids to balance, clamber and, best of all, fall off, into clear seawater. And then go back and do the same thing all over again.

→ aquafun-turizam.hr

16 Sink cocktails and party in Rabac

While Labin gets arty, Rabac parties. Just in from the seafront, surrounded by resort

hotels, the Movie Bar is where holidaymakers get down and fraternise. DJs spin all summer long, cocktails are dangerously affordable and most of the action takes place outside around a large clearing in the trees. There's occasionally live music too, but just to warm things up. Season-closing parties tend to be memorable. In high season, other party options include the Sundance Beach Club and, nearby, the Beat Beach Club, both along Obala Maršala Tita.

→ Maršala Tita 81, Rabac (099 508 9460, moviebar.hr); facebook.com/Sundance.Beach.Club; facebook.com/TheBeatBeachClubRabac

17 Uncover 500 years of family history

The Baroque Palazzo Negri in Labin's Old Town, once belonged to the noble family of the same name who moved here from the vicinity of Bergamo. First came banker and businessman Giovanni Antonio, the Negris enjoying the privileges and affection afforded them by the local Venetian rulers. The family then became involved in timber, then agricultural products, hunting and fishing. By the end of the 16th and early 17th centuries, its members owned nine townhouses, three mills and several smaller estates. In time, the palace would house a hospital, then a nursery, then a school. Today the palace is home

to the Art&Gastro Gallery Negri, run by top local olive farmer William Negri and his wife, artist Anessa. Here art, local flavours and tradition intermingle – you can peruse the gallery while sampling local cheeses and prosciutto with award-winning Negri olive oil and wines, as well as Istrian biska and medica grappas. Guided tastings are available by appointment.

→ G Martinuzzi 11, Labin (052 875 280, negri-olive.com)

18 Dine on divine seafood at Lino

Now with two restaurants on the main seafront boulevard in Rabac, ulica Maršala Tita, Lino has based its success on simply sublime seafood. Linguini with clams, spicy lobster and oven-baked dentex with home-style potatoes, this is cuisine created with love and experience, one of the founders having spent his formative years in the kitchens of New York. The setting, too, is perfect, directly overlooking the waterfront in the case of Lino 1 at No.59. Guests at evening-only Lino 2 at No.11 are treated to an Adriatic view from the upper dining terrace.

→ Maršala Tita 11 & 59, Rabac (Lino 1 091 157 6313, Lino 2 091 197 7079, restaurant-lino.hr)

19 Take in culture as it takes over Labin

Every summer, the

cobbled streets and traditional stone buildings of Labin are awash with culture. The Labin Art Republic festival, its name echoing proud urban history, involves exhibitions, concerts, theatre shows and all kinds of performances in galleries, churches, cultural venues and pretty much any kind of public space suitable. There's a fixed agenda but otherwise everything's pretty open – for most days in July and August, visitors can wander into an atelier, chat to the artist in question and catch an act of some kind in the evening.

→ labin-art-republika.com

20 Pick up some Istrian ceramics

Founded by the husband-and-wife team of Masimo and Dolores Jenkel in 1993, Merania has grown from a modest pottery workshop into a cottage industry, a Raša-based, family-run enterprise that produces creative lighting, tableware and all kinds of ornaments, even number signs for houses. Istria provides the inspiration – note the little wine jugs, bukaleta, and larger versions for pouring out soup. Visitors may visit the main workshop or browse the shop at ulica Mate Balote 31 in Labin.

→ Krapan 1A, Raša (091 544 4918, merania.hr)



Labin

9 Explore a ghostly local past

Under a kilometre from the crowds on Maslinica beach and nearby campsite in Rabac, a ghostly sight welcomes anyone who decides to take a relatively short stroll along the coast. A busy terminal between 1925 and World War II, the Teleferika was a cable car that served the local bauxite industry. Running the whole nine kilometres from the village of Cere, where the quarry was located, the line delivered the goods directly to the ships waiting here in the bay. Today the ruins of the buildings here still remain for the curious visitor to explore. The view over the waves and of Rabac beyond is sublime – though the cable car has long been out of operation.

10 Swim, dine and sleep in Rogočana

A short drive south of Labin, Rogočana (population: 88) is a sleepy Istrian hamlet whose various accommodation options allow you to explore the verdant interior of south-east Istria. One such is the Konoba Rogočana itself, not only a traditional restaurant but a comfortable, mid-range lodging with an outdoor pool. With the tavern-like eatery keeping evening hours only, this allows you to swim as the sun sets then settle down to a fine helping of fresh fish or the house meat platter of home-made sausage and stuffed turkey. Tables spread over the terrace,



Valamar Girandella Resort Sundance Beach Club

Karlič

the home
of the truffle

A family industry dating back more than 50 years now, offers visitors the chance to go on an authentic truffle hunt as well as pick up quality products created on-site.

We offer the truffle hunting experience during the whole year.

Truffles are more than just a sought-after delicacy, or a fungus found in dark forests, or haggled over then sprinkled on steak or pasta. In Istria they're a lucrative industry. Not only that, but it's an industry of family-run businesses, know-how passed down from generation to generation. And not just between



humans, dogs too have to be trained for very specific tasks that provide locals with a livelihood.

After an enlightening visit to the Karlič Estate in Paladini, you can join in the fun when locals cook up the world's largest frittata truffle omelette, using more than 2,000 eggs and 10kg of truffles. So, if you love truffles food delicacies, dogs, nature and adventure make sure to put a visit to Karlič family on your bucket list. If you want to stay more than a day in this little heaven on earth you can easily book gorgeous Villa Maslina (****) for 12 people. In villa you can relax in a pool, a sauna or jacuzzi after exploring the nature around the area. Or you can book an apartment that is theme-related to truffles for 2-4 people.



Zagreb



For further information about truffle hunting or accommodation contact the Karlič family via e-mail info@karlictartufi.hr or visit the website www.karlictartufi.hr/en

Zagreb Top 20

Compact and easy to navigate, Zagreb contains plenty of historic sights and fascinating galleries, complemented by destination restaurants, clusters of busy bars and numerous live-music venues.

1 Take a tour of Mirogoj

The final resting place for 300,000 souls of many religious backgrounds, Mirogoj is Zagreb's Highgate, and encapsulates the city's rich patchwork history. A 15-minute journey from Kaptol on the No 106 bus, Mirogoj is also an architectural gem. Behind a series of green, onion-shaped cupolas, which cap ivy-covered brick walls, are tiled arcades, monuments to Croatia's most prominent citizens. Some you would recognise from Zagreb's street signs: Stjepan Radić, for example, who gives his name to Radićeva, was a politician shot in the Belgrade Parliament in 1928. His more recent counterpart, Franjo Tuđman, is honoured for his role in the Yugoslav War with

a modern monument of black marble. The best time to visit is on All Souls' Day, November 1, when everything is shrouded in a halo of candlelight.

→ Aleja Hermanna Bollea 27

2 Visit a break-up museum

The Museum of Broken Relationships is one of the world's most eccentric collections. Set in an eighteenth-century palace in Zagreb's Upper Town, this collection of objects has been donated by the public: each tells the story of a past relationship. The museum started life as a tongue-in-cheek touring exhibition nearly a decade ago; like its symbolic mementoes of failed relationships, it wasn't supposed to be a long-term thing. Now it enjoys a

cult status at its permanent home in Zagreb. If you're recently heartbroken, cheer yourself up at its appetising new restaurant, which features playfully experimental takes on Croatian cuisine.

→ Čirilometodska 2 (01 4851 021, brokenships.com)

3 Hang out at the Art Park

Boundary-breaking art collective Pimp my Pump teamed up with street art studio Lapo Lapo to turn a run-down urban park into a vibrant open-air museum and green event space. An array of fun events, workshops and open-air exhibitions take place throughout the summer. You can peruse the make-shift sculptures, watch the artists at work, or even get involved yourself. Entrance to this urban oasis and all events, talks and workshops are totally free.

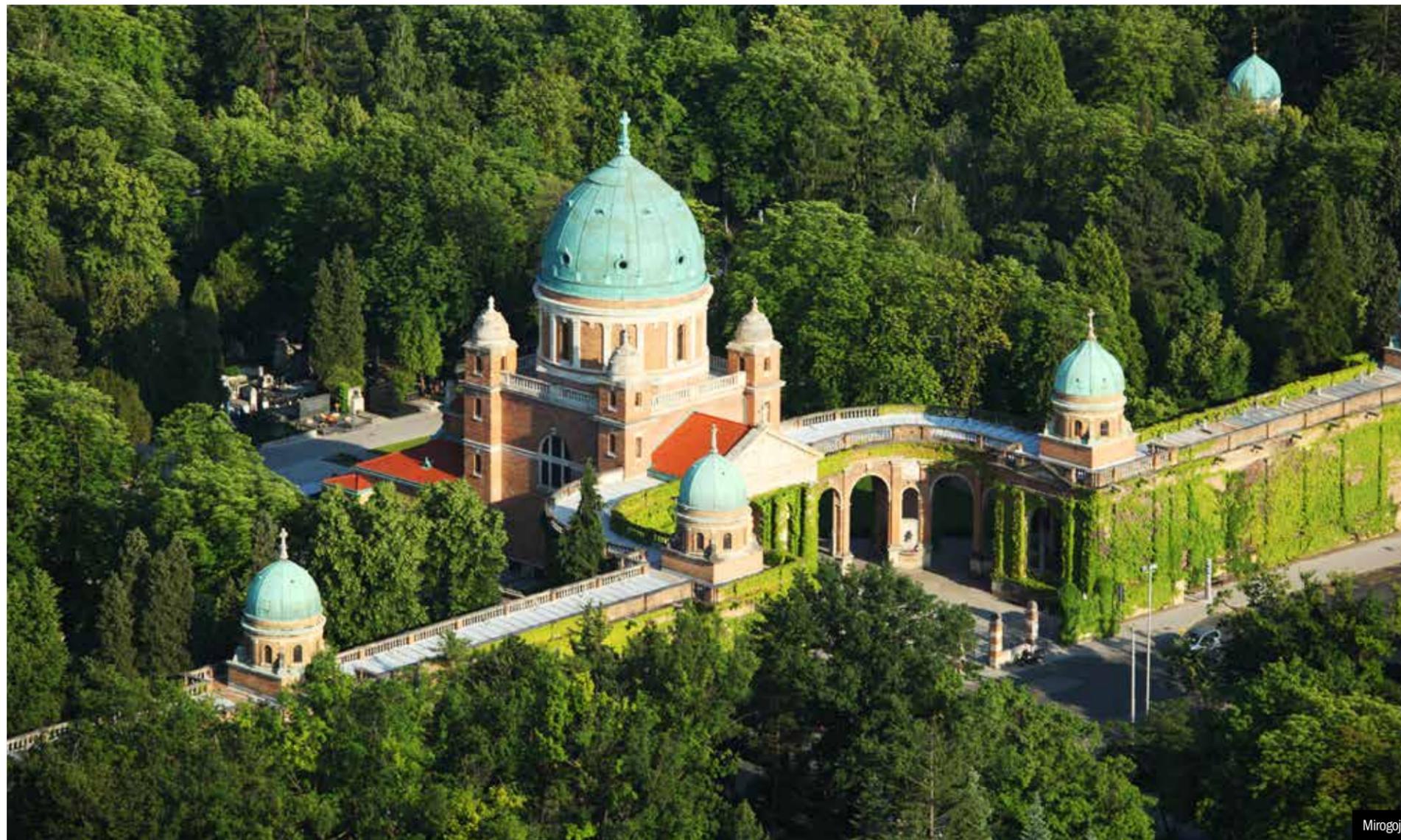
→ Park Ribnjak (artparkzagreb.com)

4 Sample modern Croatian gastronomy

A new generation of chefs are deftly transforming traditional Croatian cuisine into exquisite food experiences. And the world is taking notice. Zagreb nabbed its first Michelin star this year at Noel, an achingly cool restaurant dedicated to the flux of trends in modern gastronomy. Chef Tvrtko Šakota is sure to follow suit at the newly opened NAV restaurant, where classic Croatian dishes are given a contemporary makeover. For brilliantly imaginative, affordable cuisine, bistros like Pod Zidom and Brokenships are well worth a look.

5 Get involved in špica

The local custom of špica is the Saturday-morning habit of having coffee in Zagreb's city centre. More specifically, it takes place where Gajeva meets



Mirogoj

Bogovićeva and Preradovićeva by the flower market on Cvjetni trg, and between 11am and 2pm, after everyone has paid a visit to the Dolac market across the main square. Literally, the word means the point of something sharp. Though nominally about drinking kava and enjoying a morning off from the hassles of the work, this ritual is more about looking sharp, of seeing and being seen. It's an impromptu stage for fashionistas, wannabe glamourites, local paparazzi and hush-toned trend mongers.

6 Eat a local lunch

Cheap and satisfying, gableci are cut-price lunches sold at outlets around town where à la carte dishes may be twice as dear. You'll see boards up, usually during the working week, suggesting the three or four gableci for that day. You will find vendors of gableci around the Dolac market and Kvarternikov trg, for example, neighbourhood spots serving bean stew (grah), turkey with Zagorje pasta (purica s mlincima), and squared pasta with roasted cabbage (krautflekerli). One place to try them Gostionica Purger (Petrinjska 37), titled after the local name for someone from Zagreb.

→ Petrinjska 37 (01 4810 713, purger.hr)



The Museum of Broken Relationships



Brokenships

7 Enjoy a couple of štrukli

This distant relation of Austrian Strudel and Turkish borek is made from rolled dough, delicious when filled with the traditional cottage cheese and sour cream. Whether cooked or baked, sweet or salty, in a soup or with added poppy, pumpkin or spinach, all versions deserve attention. When taken to try štrukli in a traditional local restaurant, most first-time visitors are impressed by the gentle taste of the soft dough, creamy cheese, the eggs and sour-cream sauce. Many venues pride themselves on their štrukli, although the kitchen at the landmark Esplanade Hotel provides some of the best – if not the best – in town.

→ Antuna Mihanovića 1 (01 4566 666, esplanade.hr)

The buzz around the horseshoe bar, as thumping beats come up from the cellar, is as sassy as anywhere on Tkalčićeva.

9 Trace Zagreb's history

This former 17th-century Convent of the Clares in the Upper Town has a permanent collection of 4,500 objects illustrating Zagreb's history from prehistoric times, laid out in themed sections. These include recent Iron Age finds, walk-through reconstructions of 19th-century Ilica shops and study rooms of famous Croatian artists. Perhaps the biggest attractions at the Zagreb City Museum are the old packaging, automatic music machines and propaganda posters from the last century, offering a personal, human touch and a real feel for what life might have been like here in 1955. Many exhibits are interactive and it's well documented in English. The sundial in the courtyard is the city's oldest, and is still showing the right time.

→ Opatička 20 (01 4851 361, mgz.hr)

10 Saunter through the MSU

The largest museum ever built in Croatia and the first to be built in Zagreb for 125 years, the Museum of Contemporary Art opened its doors in 2009. It comprises 5,000sq m of exhibition space, a library, a multi-media room, a boutique and a children's workshop. The MCA, known to Croatians as the acronym MSU, is one of the major cultural institutions to have been located



Upper Town

in Novi Zagreb, the little-visited area over the Sava river. With its proximity to the redesigned BundeK recreation park, it represents a new stretch to the famous urban axis of Zagreb's Green Horseshoe, created in the 19th century.

→ Avenija Dubrovnik 17 (01 6052 700, msu.hr)

11 Go green at the Botanical Gardens

The Botanical Gardens form the east-west anchor of the 'Green Horseshoe', a U-shaped band of greenery laid out by Milan Lenuci in the 19th century. Near but removed from the bustle of the train station, it offers a wonderfully relaxing way to escape with your travelling companion amid the

plots, plants, footbridges, lakes and ponds. Just west of the train station, these lovely gardens were founded in 1889. The first plantings took place in 1892. Since, the 4.7 hectares (11.6 acres), dominated by an English-style arboretum, and containing rock gardens, lily-pad-covered ponds, symmetrical French-inspired flowerbeds and ten glasshouses (closed to the public) have been an island of tranquillity in the city centre. It's an idyllic spot to grab a shaded bench in summer. About 10,000 plant species come mainly from Croatia, some from as far as Asia.

→ Trg Marka Marulića 9A (01 4898 066, botanickivrt.biol.pmf.hr)

12 Marvel at Mimara

Set in a neo-Renaissance former school on Rooseveltov trg, the Mimara Museum contains the most impressive art collection in town: 42 rooms house 1,700 paintings, statues and archaeological finds, set up chronologically and thematically. This huge trove was gathered by art collector and philanthropist Ante Topić Mimara, much of it during and immediately after World War II. Highlights include a collection of carpets, medieval icons, Chinese porcelain, and paintings by Raphael, Velázquez, Rubens, Rembrandt and Manet. Greek and Roman finds line the lower floors. The collection is vast – only a third is ever on display.

→ Rooseveltov trg 5 (01 4828 100, mimara.hr)



Mimara Museum

Dolac, on a raised square a set of stairs up from the main square, has been the city's major trading place since 1926. Farmers from surrounding villages come to sell their home-made foodstuffs and some of the freshest fruit and vegetables you'll ever taste. In the covered market downstairs are butchers, fishmongers and old ladies selling the local speciality sir i vrhnje (cheese and cream). Flowers and lace are also widely available. Alongside, the renovated fish market, ribarnica, sells fresh produce every day but Monday.

19 Tour the street art of Zagreb

Bright and beautiful murals add flourishes of colour to Zagreb. Local street artists like OKO and Lonac have developed distinctive styles, and the popularity of their work has exploded internationally. Although it's in crumbling disrepair, the wall that runs parallel to Branimir is a good place to start. Etien's whale in the Upper Town is an important piece, as are works by Lunar, OKO and Lonac.

20 Sip Croatian craft beer

Craft beer has exploded in Zagreb over the last decade. There's a handful of excellent breweries scattered around the city, and you'll find at least one local Pale Ale on the drinks menu. Standout contemporary breweries are The Garden, Zmajska and Nova Runda, while early adopters Medvedgrad have been producing the stuff for nearly twenty years. Sample them at The Garden Brewery, on the winding terraces of Medvedgrad Tkalčićeva, or (probably) at the nearest bar.



Ella Pitr

13 Browse Britanski trg

On Sundays the fruit and veg stalls that fill Britanski trg during the week are cleared away, and an attractive bric-a-brac and antique market is laid out. In total, some 100 stallholders trade goods from first thing in the morning. Paintings, jewellery, old currency, badges, glass bottles, posters, crockery, silver, old farming tools and religious icons are all on display on wooden trestle tables. The morning is also a social occasion, locals gathering at nearby cafés.

14 Sip a rakija

A clear grappa-like fruit brandy, rakija comes in a baffling range of styles. Quality rakija is usually 40 percent proof, but can be anything up to 80 per cent. The most typical base ingredients are plums and grapes, although you'll come across grappas made from apples, peaches, pears, cherries and figs too. Also popular are honey-based medica, orahovica from walnuts and biska from mistletoe leaves (not its poisonous berries).

15 Relax at the Maksimir

A ten-minute tram ride from the main square heading east of the centre, Maksimir Park comprises an attractive 18 hectares (45 acres) of welcome greenery opened to an appreciative public in 1794. Its many woods, meadows and lakes were landscaped in what was

then considered the English style. Today rolling hills cradle footpaths and cafés, providing ample room for jogging, romancing and relaxation. At one end you'll find the City Zoo, with the daily feeding times posted up for the seals, sea lions and otters, so that you can time a family visit around them. On the other side of the road stands Croatia's national football stadium, also called the Maksimir, base of hometown club Dinamo Zagreb.

16 Ramble and slalom at Sljeme

The highest peak of Medvednica Nature Park near Zagreb, Sljeme is also the name used to define a series of accessible slopes that welcome hikers and ramblers all year round. They're best known for their climbing and skiing – the hills are dotted with mountain lodges and Sljeme has been developed as a major international skiing centre, a fixture on the sport's winter calendar. It provides training slopes for amateurs, night skiing, sledging and snowboarding for enthusiasts of all ages and abilities. There is snow cover on Medvednica for around 100 days a year and the slopes are given a coating of artificial snow when necessary, prolonging the season to four months.

17 Marvel at the Cathedral

If Zagreb has an iconic feature, it's the twin towers of its Cathedral, created by Hermann Bollé after an earthquake struck

the city in 1880. Right in the centre of town, not five minutes' walk from the main square, the Cathedral of the Assumption of the Holy Virgin Mary, to give it its full title, is Zagreb's most visible tourist attraction. Though much of the exterior has long been veiled behind construction sheathing, the neo-Gothic twin towers are visible over the city and are as close as Zagreb gets to a visual identity worthy of calling-card status. They were added by architect Hermann Bollé in the post-1880 rebuild, while the interior received neo-gothic altars, 19th-century stained glass, and a relief by Ivan Meštrović that marks the resting place of controversial Croatian Archbishop Alojzije Stepinac. An effigy of the archbishop rests on a raised platform behind the main altar.

18 Dander round the daily market

The daily market or



Dolac

Zagreb Advent Run

As the season of gluttony commences, stay elf-y this Christmas with Advent Fun Run.



SUMMER IS traditionally the most popular time for people visiting the Croatian capital of Zagreb. But, in the last ten years, the city's Advent celebrations have become the most renowned in the continent, winning the title of 'Best Christmas Market in Europe' for three years running. Zagreb's streets and parks glow with a seasonal spirit that's every bit as bright as the sunshine in summer. People are drawn onto the streets by live music, kućice, small wooden-roofed houses selling regional street food, mulled wine and handcrafted Christmas gifts - plus reams of twinkly Christmas lights hanging from street lamps and trees. Warmed by winter clothes and mulled wine, it's a time of year to relax, revel and enjoy.

But it's worth remembering to stay healthy even during this season of gluttony. With its popularity rising almost as fast as Zagreb's Advent, the city's Advent Run is quickly becoming the healthiest Christmas activity around. A fun and family-oriented day out, Zagreb Advent Run is the perfect way to balance out your calorific Christmas intake, and a great way to feel good about yourself in the process.

Santa himself, his reindeer and his elf minions are some of the most popular costumes seen on the run, which has both five and ten-kilometre versions, welcoming runners of every age and ability. Both courses run a similarly scenic route, starting off at the Westin Hotel, before taking in the major Advent sites, including the gloriously decorated city centre parks and downtown streets like Ilica. More than 2,500 runners from 29 countries around the world participated in 2018. With such a beautiful backdrop, it's little wonder that Zagreb's Advent Fun Run now attracts even more participants than similar runs in Vienna, London and Dublin.

In previous years, significant funds have been raised through the event for diabetes sufferers and children with long term illnesses. Participation is a great way to feel good about yourself at this traditional time of giving.

Use Zagreb's Advent Fun Run as your perfect excuse to visit the Croatian capital this Christmas. Applications are open soon and can be sourced, alongside all news relating to this year's event, from the Facebook pages of ZagrebAdventRun and organisers RunCroatia.



'I feel immense gratitude that I had a chance to run in this race with my family and to, thereby, personally testify to the importance of a healthy life and contribute to the spirit of holiday gift-giving. When we launched the Zagreb Advent Run project with our partners from Run Croatia, our desire was to create this kind of event; a joyful holiday gettogether with a humanitarian side to it. We are extremely happy and proud to see how many race partners joined our vision, and how many race participants came from all over the world' Mario Petrović, president of Millenium promocija, Croatia's leading PR agency and co-organiser of Zagreb Advent Run, whose 9-year-old son Pavel completed the race for the second time in 2018, while his wife Ana completed the race for hikers.

'The goal of this joyful and colorful race was to make the public aware of the health benefits of running in an entertaining way, and to enable all the participants of the race to enjoy a unique sport experience in the magical Zagreb Advent. I am especially happy that we ran through the most beautiful parts of Zagreb, perfectly decorated for Christmas, in a family atmosphere,' Berislav Sokač, founder and co-organiser of Zagreb Advent Run, who completed the last race with his ten-year-old son Odin.



ATTRACTIONS

Art Pavilion

Created for the Millennial exhibition in Budapest in 1896, this impressive, iron-framed building was then shipped back to Zagreb, where it centrepieces Tomislav square facing the train station. It still regularly hosts major art exhibitions.

→ Trg kralja Tomislava 22 (01 4876 487, umjetnicki-paviljon.hr)

Botanical Gardens

Just west of the train station and forming the east-west arm of the Green Horseshoe, these lovely gardens were founded in 1889. The first plantings took place in 1892. Since, the 4.7 hectares (11.6 acres), dominated by an English-style arboretum, and containing rock gardens, lily-pad-covered ponds, symmetrical French-inspired flowerbeds and ten glasshouses (closed to the public) have been an island of tranquillity in the city centre. It's an idyllic spot to grab a shaded bench in summer. About 10,000 plant species come mainly from Croatia, some from as far as Asia.

→ Trg Marka Marulića 9A (01 4898 066, botanickivrt.biol.pmf.hr)

Cathedral

The Cathedral of the Assumption of the Holy Virgin Mary (Katedrala



Botanical Garden

Uznesenja Blažene Djevice Marije) is Zagreb's principal landmark. And though much of the exterior has long been veiled behind construction sheathing, its neo-Gothic twin towers, visible over the city, are worthy of calling-card status. The first church was destroyed by the Tatars in 1242 and later reconstructions were damaged by fire. After an earthquake in 1880 the city hired architect Hermann Bollé, who added a monumental pair of 105m-high bell towers. The interior remains austere: neo-gothic altars,

19th-century stained glass, and an Ivan Meštrović relief that marks the resting place of controversial Croatian Archbishop Alojzije Stepinac. An effigy of the archbishop rests on a raised platform behind the main altar.

→ Kaptol 31

Croatian Architecture Museum

Founded in 1995, this useful resource houses thousands of items relating to Croatian architecture from the late 1800s to the present day, though has no

permanent display. It occasionally hosts temporary exhibitions, lectures and discussions.

→ Ivana Gorana Kovačića 37 (01 4834 551, info.hazu.hr/hr/o-akademiji/jedinice/hrvatski_muzej_arhitekture)

Croatian Association of Artists

Visit for the building alone, a circular pavilion standing in the middle of Victims of Fascism Square a ten-minute walk south-east of the main square. The building was designed by sculptor Ivan Meštrović just before World War II as an exhibition space in honour of the then Yugoslav King Peter I. Inside, the circular walls contain three galleries, which span two floors and provide an outstanding venue for a dynamic program of contemporary art exhibitions and events organized by the Croatian Association of Artists (HDLU). The circular central hall features natural light through the cupola.

→ Trg žrtava fašizma 16 (01 4834 551, info.hazu.hr/hr/o-akademiji/jedinice/hrvatski_muzej_arhitekture)

Croatian History Museum

Situated in the Baroque-era Oršić-Kulmer Palace, the Croatian History Museum does not have a permanent display but hosts a seasonally changing programme of themed exhibitions, frequently touching on the salient points of Croatian history.

→ Antuna Gustava Matoša 9 (01 4851 900, hismus.hr)

Croatian Museum of Naive Art

Housed on the second floor of the 18th-century Raffay Palace, this collection is a solid introduction to Croatian Naive Art, mostly the work of self-taught peasant painters from the villages of the east. The collection is frequently rotated but there are usually plenty of representations of rural life executed by the big names of the genre: Ivan Generalić, Mirko Virius and Ivan Rabuzin. Also included are international primitives such as the self-taught Polish-Ukrainian artist Niki for.

→ Čirilometodska 3 (01 4851 911, hmnu.hr)

Croatian National Theatre

This neo-baroque landmark, opened by Habsburg Emperor Franz Josef in 1895, played a vital role in the establishment of a Croatian national identity. What you find today is a sumptuous interior – a suitably ornate backdrop for local-language theatre, congresses and promotional events.

→ Trg Republike Hrvatske 15 (01 4888 488, hnk.hr)

Croatian Natural History Museum

As important a scientific institute as it is a public attraction, this museum holds exhibits including rocks and minerals from around the globe, many on permanent display. Look out for the section on prehistoric Krapina man, one of the most significant of its kind. The zoological collection features the fauna of Croatia. There's a botanical section and herbaria too. The museum also publishes the scientific journal 'Natura Croatica'.

→ Demetrova 1 (01 4851 700, hpm.hr)

Ethnographic Museum

Ageing exhibition halls and bad lighting shouldn't put you off the idea of visiting this absorbing collection, which begins with a ground-floor display of items brought home by Croatian explorers, including ritual masks from the Congo, Indian textiles, tree-bark paintings from Australia and Chinese ceremonial dresses. Upstairs is an extensive display of Croatian folk costumes covering all regions of the country, together with domestic artefacts

and agricultural implements. Colourful, well-staged temporary exhibitions provide additional reason to visit.

→ Trg Mažuranića 14 (01 4826 108, emz.hr)

Galerija Klovićevi dvori

This is the major venue for touring art exhibitions, mixing blockbuster international shows with exhibitions on Croatian themes. Subjects in recent seasons have included Viennese Secessionism, German Expressionism, Marc Chagall and the Russian avant-garde.

→ Jezuitski trg 4 (01 4851 926, gkd.hr)

Lauba House

Lurking mysteriously in a little-visited area 4km west of the centre is this brand-new private art gallery, occupying a century-old barrack block painted in alluring matt black by modern restorers. Displaying the collection of businessman Tomislav Kličko, Lauba includes major works by virtually everyone who is anyone in Croatian art from about 1950 onwards. If you've already visited the Museum of Contemporary

Art, then Lauba will provide you with a refreshingly alternative take on the local art establishment, concentrating on visually appealing works as well as more conceptual exercises. Figurative paintings by Lovro Artuković and disarmingly bling sculptures by Kristian Kožul are among the highlights.

→ Baruna Filipovića 23A (01 4810 714, lauba.hr)

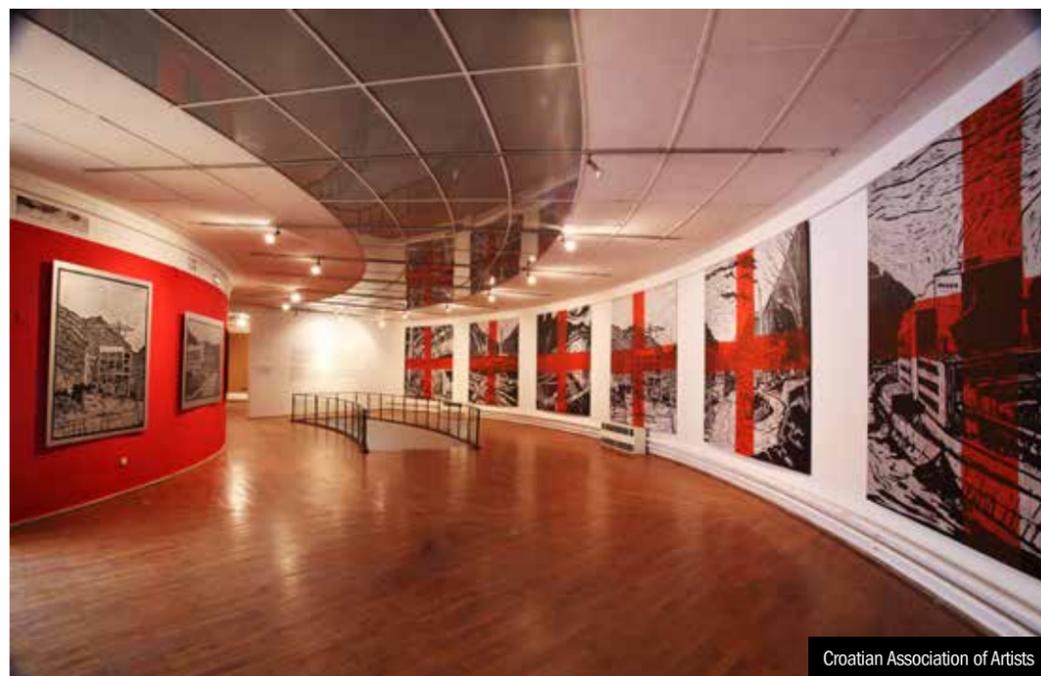
Lisinski Concert Hall

Opened in 1973, this 2,000-seater is the main classical venue in town, located just over the Sava. Opera, ballet and theatre are staged here, and the Lisinski, named after the 19th-century Croatian composer, also serves as a convention centre. There's a 300-capacity smaller hall here too. The venue saw a serious revamp before hosting the Eurovision Song Contest in 1990, and minor renovations in 2009.

→ Trg Stjepana Radića 4 (01 6121 166, lisinski.hr)

Maksimir Park & Zoo

A ten-minute tram ride from the main square heading east of the centre, these attractive 18 hectares



Croatian Association of Artists



Lauba

Zagreb Attractions

(45 acres) of welcome greenery were opened to an appreciative public in 1794, the many woods, meadows and lakes landscaped in what was then considered the English style. Rolling hills cradle footpaths and cafés, providing ample room for jogging, romancing and relaxation. At one end you'll find the City Zoo, with the daily feeding times posted up for the seals, sea lions and otters, so that you can time a family visit around them. On the other side of the road stands Croatia's national football stadium, also called the Maksimir, base of home-town club Dinamo Zagreb.

→ Maksimirski perivoj 1 (01 2302 198, zoo.hr)

Meštrović Atelijer

Croatia's most internationally renowned sculptor, Ivan Meštrović, lived and worked in this restored trio of adjoining 17th-century mansions in Gornji Grad between the years 1923 and 1942. The collection here is spectacular, representing major works from the artist's prolific first four decades. Prominently, the Woman by the Sea sculpture in Carrara marble greets you as you enter the actual atelier – one of six exhibit spaces. As well as marble, there are stone, wood and bronze sculptures. There are also reliefs, drawings and graphics gracing the two floors of the house, the front atrium and his atelier just off the ivy-covered courtyard. The dimly lit interiors are lined with beautiful wood panelling and exude an intimate ambience.

→ Mletačka 8 (01 4851 123, mestrovic.hr)

Mimara Museum

When it comes to historical art collections, the Mimara is certainly Zagreb's biggest in terms of quantity. Donated to the city by wealthy patron Ante Topić Mimara, the collection includes paintings, statues and archaeological finds, organised chronologically and thematically but with little by way of English explanation. Highlights on the ground floor include oriental carpets, south-east Asian sculpture and Chinese porcelain, while the picture galleries upstairs display works from every era from the Gothic period onwards, with artists like Velázquez, Rubens, Rembrandt and Manet each putting in an appearance. It's also an important venue for

temporary exhibitions with an art or archeological theme.

→ Rooseveltov trg 5 (01 4828 100, mimara.hr)

Mirogoj

It's a pity more don't make it to this attractive cemetery. Mirogoj is widely regarded as one of the city's architectural gems. Behind a series of green, onion-shaped cupolas that cap ivy-covered brick walls, are tiled arcades, monuments to Croatia's most prominent citizens and the final resting place of 300,000 souls of various religious backgrounds. Stejepan Radić, who was shot in the Yugoslav Parliament in 1928, is buried here; so are Croatian literary giants Petar Preradović and Tin Ujević. Designed by Hermann Bollé of Cathedral fame, Mirogoj opened in 1876. As the rolling landscape continues to gain residents, it also gathers more museum-worthy sculptures, headstones and memorials. Renowned 20th-century Croatian sculptors Ivan Meštrović and Ivan Rendić are responsible for some of them. Of special note: Franjo Tuđman's modern, black-marble monument, worthy of an independent nation's first president. The grave of basketball legend Dražen Petrović, who died in a car accident at 28, is one of the most visited sites. Mirogoj comes into its own on All Souls' Day, November 1, when Croatian families visit loved ones equipped



Moderna Galerija

with thousands of flickering candles – a moving experience.

→ Hermanna Bollea 27

Moderna Galerija

Housed in the impecably renovated Vraniczany Palace on Zrinjevac, the Modern Gallery is

home to the national collection of 19th- and 20th-century art. It kicks off in spectacular fashion with huge canvases by late-19th-century painters Vlaho Bukovac and Celestin Medović dominating the sublimely proportioned hexagonal entrance hall. From



Meštrović Atelijer

TIME OUT ZAGREB

DOWNLOAD YOUR COPY NOW!



Want to read Time Out Zagreb on your computer, smartphone or tablet for free?
timeout.com/croatia/digital-edition

TimeOut
ZAGREB



Museum of Contemporary Art

here the collection works its way chronologically through the history of Croatian painting, taking in Ljubo Babić's entrancing 1920s landscapes and Edo Murtić's jazzy exercises in 1950's abstract art. Several contemporary artists are featured here too – sufficient to whet your appetite before hopping over the river to the Museum of Contemporary Art to see some more. The Moderna Galerija's most innovative feature is the tactile gallery, a room containing versions of famous paintings in relief form (together with Braille captions) for unsighted visitors to explore.
→ Hebrangova 1 (01 6041 055, moderna-galerija.hr)

Museum of Arts & Crafts

This grand Hermann Bollé-designed palace, founded in 1880, was originally based on 'a collection of samples for master craftsmen and artists who need to re-improve production of items of everyday use'. It has now grown to become the country's premier collection of applied art, with a wide-ranging gaggle of pieces from Baroque altar pieces to Biedermeier furniture, domestic ceramics, clocks and contemporary poster design. A side

room full of synagogue silverware and ritual candlesticks recalls the rich heritage of Zagreb's pre-World War II Jewish community. On the top floor, a collection of 19th-20th century ball gowns and evening dresses provides a strong whiff of glamour. The museum is also a major venue for temporary exhibitions with big themes.
→ Trg Republike Hrvatske 10 (01 4882 111, muo.hr)

Museum of Broken Relationships

Starting as a playfully ironic art installation and subsequently an international touring exhibition that becomes something of a global cult, the Museum of Broken Relationships has become Zagreb's prime visitor attraction since opening the doors of its permanent home in late 2010. Housed in one of the Upper Town's finest Baroque mansions, the thematic display takes visitors through a series of different emotions associated with break-up, illustrated by objects donated by members of the public. It has previously been named 'most innovative museum' at the European Museum Awards.
→ Čirilometodska 2 (01 4851 021, brokenrelationships.com)

Museum of Contemporary Art

Costing some €60 million and covering 14,500 square metres, the MCA – MSU in Croatian – is the most significant museum to open in Zagreb for more than a century. Its collection includes pieces from the 1920s and gathered since 1954 when Zagreb's original MCA (in Upper Town) was founded. Of particular note are Carsten Höller's slides, similar to the 'Test Site' installation he built for Tate Modern's Turbine Hall but custom-made and site specific for Zagreb – pieces of art patrons can ride to the parking lot. Croatia's outstanding 1950s generation of abstract-geometric artists (Ivan Picelj, Aleksandar Srnec, Vjenceslav Richter, Vlado Kristl) play a starring role in the collection, alongside photographs and films documenting the more outlandish antics of legendary performance artists like Tom Gotovac and Vlasta Delimar. The new-media and computer-art works produced by the Zagreb-based New Tendencies movement in the late '60s and early 70s reveals just how ahead-of-its-time much of Croatian art really was.
→ Avenija Dubrovnik 17 (01 6052 700, msu.hr)

Museum of Illusions

This permanent exhibition celebrates the immersive world of illusions and spatial trickery. Accompanying the range of optical installations and holograms, it's backed up by educational info explaining the science behind how they work. The gift shop is worth checking out for some wacky toys and lighting accessories.
→ Ilica 72 (01 7999 609, muzejiluzija.com)

Nikola Tesla Technical Museum

A vast space is needed for these aircraft, vintage cars, an 80-year-old snowmobile, a World War II mini-submarine, 19th-century fire engines and a Dubrovnik tram from 1912. There's also a small planetarium, flanked by a life-size model of an unmanned Soviet moon-roving vehicle, and a similarly true-to-life copy of the American Mercury programme space capsules of the early Sixties. The section dedicated to Nikola Tesla illustrates just how advanced this turn-of-the-century pioneer of electricity generation and radio transmission actually was. Daily demonstrations in his laboratory involve a short lecture during which some of his inventions are put through their paces.
→ Savska 18 (01 4844 050, tehnicki-muzej.hr)



Nikola Tesla Technical Museum

St Mark's Church

Two coats of arms grace the red-white-and-blue chequered roof of this emblematic church: Zagreb's and Croatia's. Since the 1200s when the Romanesque original was built, the church has gone through many architectural styles – note the Gothic south portal and baroque, copper-covered belltower. Inside are hand-painted walls by Jozo Kljaković and a crucifix by Meštrović. The square outside, housing the Ban's Palace and the Croatian Parliament, has been the hub of political activity since the 1500s.
→ Trg Sv. Marka 5

Strossmayer's Gallery of Old Masters

This neo-Renaissance palace, built in 1884 to accommodate Bishop Josip Strossmayer's private collection of European paintings, is Zagreb's foremost collection of old masters. They are hung in nine intimate rooms on the second floor. Italians fill the first six, with Fra Beato Angelico's Martyrdom of St Peter in room 1, Bellini's newly restored Saints Augustine and Benedict in room 3, and Carpaccio's Martyrdom of St Sebastian right next to it. The collection continues with Flemish (Brueghel), Dutch and German painters, with a final room devoted to the French – Portrait of Madame Récamier by Jean Antoine Gros is the stand-out picture here.
→ Zrinjevac 11 (01 4895 117, info.hazu.hr/hr/o-akademiji/jednice/strossmayerova_galerija_starih_majstora)



Museum of Illusions

Zagreb attractions

Zagreb City Museum

Occupying the 17th-century Convent of the Clares, the City Museum traces Zagreb's history from prehistoric times until today. Themed sections include recent Iron Age finds, walk-through reconstructions of 19th-century Ilica shops and study rooms of Croatian artists. One of the most riveting sections is the room-sized floor map of Zagreb's 19th-century Lower Town, complete with scale models of its main buildings mounted on pedestals. Here you can retrace your steps that day or plan your evening out. Other captivating nuggets include old packaging, watches and automatic music machines. Propaganda posters of 20th-century political and religious figures act as a finale. Many exhibits are interactive and it's all well documented in English.
→ Opatička 20 (01 4851 361, mgz.hr)

RESTAURANTS

50 A Burger & Champagne Bar

Handily located behind the main square, this funky burger bar is the result of a global journey spanning New York, Hong Kong and Hvar. The menu uses local ingredients wherever possible, featuring Pag lamb, Istrian truffles and Dalmatian fig jam. There are nods to the owner's New York/Hong Kong upbringing too with pan-Asian flourishes like bao buns packed with beef, kimchi and wasabi mayo and bowls of ramen broth with silky noodles. The wine list is pleasantly varied, and there is craft beer on tap from Zagreb's Garden Brewery. The cocktails are intoxicatingly good. Compared with its competitors, 50 A Burger isn't cheap but an extra 20-30kn (€3) is a reasonable price to pay for burgers this good.

→ Vlačka 17 (099 300 4222, facebook.com/weare50ZG)

Apetit City

Bustling, busy but also moderately smart, Appetit City is intended for lunching city folk as well as more romantically inclined evening diners. The menu charts a course between modern European and traditional Croatian cuisine, including much that looks deceptively simple or



50 A Burger & Champagne Bar

old-fashioned – the fried calf livers with gorgonzola (85kn) are superb. Steaks and fillets of fish also feature on a list of mains that hover in the 90kn-160kn range.

→ Masarykova 18 (01 4811 077, apetit.hr)

AS

Opened in the 1970s in Zelengaj Park and in the woods, AS is a pillar of the seafood dining scene in Zagreb. The interior is quite ornate, with white-linen tablecloths, oil paintings and a marble fireplace. In summer, diners clamour for the leafy terrace. The menu choices

– top-class white fish from the Adriatic, lobster, octopus, squid – are always fresh. There's also an extensive wine selection with a heavy emphasis on Croatian labels.

→ Zelengaj 2 (01 4609 222, hotel-as.hr)

Baltazar

This rustic-style restaurant attracts an upmarket clientele to its little Kaptol courtyard with its international offerings, traditional grills, seafood and regional meats from Zagorje and Slavonia. Duck, lamb and turkey are also featured. Service and presentation

are impeccable, allowing the bill to creep up to 300kn a head with wine, but carnivores won't begrudge it in the slightest. In summer a pretty terrace comes into its own..

→ Nova Ves 4 (01 4666 999, facebook.com/restoranbaltazar)

Barbieri's

A sleek restaurant presided over by Croatian chef Mauro Renje, its legendary owner Andrej Barbieri sadly passed away this year. Inspired by French brasseries, servings are small but remarkably well-crafted, and the food plays to local strengths – there's Adriatic fish-dishes with dollops of fancy purees, novel uses of Slavonian black pig and a stellar range of starters. Inside, it's a low-light suede and dark leather affair, with a cocktail bar serving princely cocktails. One of Zagreb's pricier establishments with an opportune spot on Tkalčićeva, the location is hard to beat.

→ Tkalčićeva 90 (01 6446 502, facebook.com/restaurantszagreb)

Beštija

Run by the team behind the Flying Pig on Hvar, Beštija is a new bistro bursting with fresh ideas. The décor is modern and unpretentiously shabby, managing to avoid many of the industrial tropes that have come to define 'The Bistro' – there are no hanging naked lightbulbs or exposed brickwork. The soundtrack is woosily ambient, a hipster-friendly playlist that oscillates between Brian Wilson, Cymande and The Grateful Dead. And the menu? Reassuringly small, it changes daily, but you can expect a cast of Adriatic favourites (grilled fish, Pag lamb) prepared with flavourful, fruity embellishments. Duck breast with homemade pasta arrives in a mushroom and cherry sauce. The grilled seabream is crisp-skinned and soft-fleshed, served with lemony chickpeas for acidity. As if to purposefully flaunt the freshness of their ingredients, a just-delivered box of veg sat briefly on the chef's counter before being hoisted into the kitchen to prepare for the next batch of customers. The drinks menu matches the light quality of the food - Istrian whites are well-represented, alongside Garden craft beers and a few cocktails. Mains are priced between



Bistro Apetit

80-100kn – what you might pay for an average fish supper elsewhere, well worth the outlay for food this fantastically fresh.

→ Masarykova 11/1 (091 324 0120, facebook.com/bestijazagreb)

Bistro Apetit

Bistro Apetit offers superb standards of food, wine and service

– standards imposed by Croatian chef and owner Marin Rendić. One key to its success is the location, hidden in a hedged garden on a tranquil residential street, just a short walk north of the city's Gradec old quarter. The cooking mixes the best Adriatic cuisine with contemporary European. Apetit is by no means beyond

the average pocket, and there are always some truly outstanding dishes on the seasonally-changing menu. And the desserts are truly heavenly.

→ Jurjevska 65A (01 4677 335, bistroapetit.com)

Boban

Named after the local football hero Zvonimir Boban, this popular operation is set just off Jelačić. The kitchen turns out an enormous range of pastas. For instance, both the tagliatelle with truffles (75kn) and home-made black-squid gnocchi with salmon (71kn) are scrumptious – and the portions are staggering. You probably won't need a starter, unless a group of you is sharing a Piatto Boban (81kn) of delicious cold meats and cheeses. There are meaty mains, too, pork tenderloin (77kn), and steaks (112kn-122kn).

→ Gajeva 9 (01 4811 549, boban.hr)

Brokenships Bistro

This culinary offshoot of Zagreb's Museum of Broken Relationships is entered via a different doorway – and is often missed by visitors who drift out of the exhibition without knowing that good food is just around the corner. You might be relieved to know that neither the menu nor the decor is themed around the subject of the museum. With low ceilings, maroon walls and rough-looking wood tables, the interior is certainly moody, but is actually quite sensual with it. The menu goes for a typically bistro-esque mixture of Central



Boban

European staples and globe-trotting experimentation. In many cases there's a choice between small or big portions so you can mix and share your mains or treat them like tapas: fish stew, orzotto with beans and pork, and squid rissoles being among the choices (and with small/big portion prices ranging from about 55Kn to 90Kn or over). Duck with chestnuts (145Kn) or roast lamb shanks (160Kn) are the delectable standouts among the more substantial mains, although portions are small and you'll need a starter or dessert in order to feel well fed. The excellent cream soups (featuring pumpkin, cauliflower or other vegetables depending on season) are a great way to kick things off; the accompanying home-baked bread is a knockout.

→ Katarinin trg 3 (01 203 5906, brokenshipsbistro.com)

Carpaccio

Carpaccio delivers stylish Italian-themed dining in a wonderfully convenient bang-in-the-centre location. For starters, there's a generous list of carpaccios, with marinated Adriatic fish or salmon among the most succulent choices. There are plenty of vegetarian options among the risottos and pastas, and substantial steaks and veal cutlets among the meaty mains. Leave room for dessert: the house semifreddo and tiramisu are difficult to choose between. Chic black furnishings, reproduction Art Nouveau posters, and a soundtrack of Italian pop provide the backdrop. There is a lengthy list of quality Croatian and Italian wines, a reasonable number of which are available by the glass.

→ Teslina 14 (01 4822 331, ristorantecarpaccio.hr)

Dubravkin put

Located in a wooded dell between the Upper Town and the Tužkanac woods, it features a cool minimalist interior full of dark-brown furniture tones and low-key lighting. Seafood remains the kitchen's strong point, and both the baked fish (420kn/kg) and a 12-course tasting menu (465kn per person) are well worth the splash-out. Otherwise choose between exquisitely prepared and presented mains such as monkfish in black-olive paste, rack of lamb or oxtail, all in the 130kn range. It's also a stylish venue for an intimate drink, with hundreds of wines to



Barbieri's

Zagreb Restaurants

choose from and a tempting menu of nibble-snacks chalked up on a board beside the bar.

→ Dubravkin put 2 (01 4834 975, dubravkin-put.com)

Duksa

Located a few strides away from the northwestern end of Maksimir park, this pizzeria is a great place to end up after a stroll. Situated on the ground floor of a new box-shaped building it comes across quite convincingly as a cosy neighbourhood eatery, with an interior featuring pastel-coloured cushions and some charming family photographs. There's a lovely terrace at the back with large potted plants and small pots of basil on the tables. Pizzas is all they do, and the choice is large.

→ Duknovićeva 4 (01 233 4556, duksa.hr)

Eggspres

Popular with Zagreb's weekend brunch crowd, Eggspres offers a world-spanning selection of egg dishes – there's perfectly poached Eggs Benedict, omelets, Shakshuka; whatever way you like yours, they have it cracked. Prices are reasonable, the service is friendly and eggs are cooked to perfection. Simple cocktails like Mimosas and Aperol Spritz are available inside, the bright, modern interior features exposed brickwork, acres of seating and a grand piano – slightly incongruous with its barmy eggs-only concept menu.

→ Boškovićeva 11 (no number, facebook.com/EggspresZg)

El Toro

Occupying the ground floor of one of those curvy, almost art-deco buildings on Šubićeva, this much-touted steak-and-much-more besides house cultivates an aura of design-magazine cool, with a suave blend of browns and matt blacks, and a convex window that provides a swivel-eye view of the street scene outside. A lot of people come for the steaks (160-220Kn), which are expertly grilled to the customer's specifications and certainly count among the best that you will get east of the Adriatic. There's a pronounced Latin-American-fusion approach to the starters and snacks, and it's here that El Toro's creative side comes to the fore – the prawn ceviche (raw prawns in a lime, coriander and chili sauce; 95Kn) is a divine way to kick off a

memorable meal; while the Korean beef taco (two pieces; 55Kn) hits the right sweet-and-sour spots although may not be quite as spicy as some people might like. Music is, for the most part, jazzy or loungey, service the right blend between informal and attentive.

→ Fra Filipa Grabovca 1 (099 613 2926, eltoro.hr)

Fidel Gastro

Not exactly in a well-travelled part of Zagreb but well worth the trip, Fidel Gastro is one of the city's most versatile bistro destinations and also one of the biggest, a large high-ceilinged space done out in post-industrial blacks, greys and bronzes. An unashamedly eclectic menu ranges from wok fries to duck breast (138Kn) and rib-eye steak (220Kn). There's always a good balance between meat and seafood and an enterprising readiness to mix local ingredients with oriental spice. Among the more inexpensive dishes, the perfectly executed carbonara (78Kn) has become something of a signature item. A considerable amount of artistry goes into the desserts, with a knockout pumpkin pie (28Kn) leading a colourful parade of fruit tarts and wobbly-moussy puddings. Service is smooth, and the background music is just as carefully curated as the food (during our visit: big-band jazz and Sinatra-style crooning).

→ Krste Pavletića 1 (091 255 2724, fidelgastro.hr)

Franko's Pizza & Bar

The opening of this much anticipated new venture was accompanied by the kind of PR fanfare that saw journalists reviewing the restaurant before they'd even eating there. Happily the hype has not been in vain; we went there towards the end of Franko's first week of business and found plenty of positives and absolutely nothing to complain about. It's a high-end pizzeria that delivers the goods, with ingredients sourced from Italian suppliers and a high degree of care invested in preparing the dough. Most of the toppings follow traditional Italian models although there's a lot of artistic license; Sweet Sky mixes mozzarella with pear, walnut and pomegranate; Wild Wild Boar is garnished with wild boar sausage and truffles; Il Respirare del Mare goes for prawns, pomegranate and lime. We opted

for the Calabrian Red (88Kn) with spicy sausage and hot peppers, which came with perfectly crispy crust and plentiful springy cheese, and a real paprika-bite to the topping. Service is highly professional and well-drilled – this is one of the few places in the city where Time Out's down-at-heel scribe was addressed throughout as cijenjeni gospodin ("the esteemed gentleman"), and to be frank we could get quite used to that.

→ Branimirova 71A (01 6530 884, facebook.com/frankoszagreb)

Garden Bar & Kitchen

Having spent a couple of years establishing a unique brewery-cum-bar-cum-DJ space out in the suburbs, the ever-agile Garden Brewery now has a base in the city centre too – allowing aficionados to save serious money on all those taxi fares. First and foremost it's an excellent multi-tap, serving the Garden's five core beers, a handful of their seasonal specials, and one or two guest brews. It's also a very

good place for lunch or evening munchies, with a menu artfully poised between creative fusion cuisine and grub that goes well with alcohol. It's one of the best places in town for a good inexpensive lunch, with daily menus (Mondays to Fridays till 3pm) offering two courses for 65-68Kn. Items on the main menu frequently come with a global-meets-local twist: the fish and chips feature Croatian salmon trout; rolling up the buncek (roast pork knuckle) and serving it in a hot-dog bun is a culinary joke that works rather well. The knockout Zagorska juha (soup from the Zagorje region; 30Kn) is chunky, full of flavour, and serves admirably as a quick lunch in its own right. And as you might expect from the Garden crew the place very much looks and sounds the part, with a minimalism-meets-pop-art interior and a soundtrack that runs from vintage soul to clubby electronica.

→ Preradovićeva 12 (099 476 4634, thegarden.hr)



Haustor Haus



Konoba Didov san

Gyoza

The owner of this little bar-cum-restaurant spent years living in Japan, before moving to New York, and finally, returning with his Japanese partner to Zagreb, equipped with culinary expertise. But he'll be more than happy to tell you that himself, in elaborate, gesticulated detail. The menu is small and specialised, and each meal – whether it be glass-noodles with prawns, or the Saturday special ramen – is prepared exactly as it would be in an izakaya bar in Tokyo. As its name suggests, the star of the show is the gyoza, traditional little parcels packed with grated meats or vegetables, which, when dipped in soy sauce, taste salty, fragrant, and fresh. It's not fine dining – don't expect elaborate sushi platters. Instead, you'll get simple, authentic dishes served up by the friendliest staff in the city.

→ Boškovićeva 6 (01 5584 088, facebook.com/gyozasakebar)

Haustor Haus

One of Zagreb's most talked-about new openings of 2018, Haustor Haus serves up a creative mix of modern Croatian and global fusion cuisine, with a shrewd choice of meat, fish and vegetable mains and a daily special or two chalked up on the board. An intimate 8-table affair in a courtyard setting, it's a mellow and relaxing place to spend an hour or two, the feel-good factor accentuated by prompt and exceedingly attentive service. Mains (75-130Kn) range from white fish to rump steak, and

frequently involve imaginative pairings of local ingredients and global spice. Pretty much everything that comes out of the kitchen is imaginative and well crafted. The smooth and tangy tomato soup (25Kn) is worth popping in for on its own account; our risotto (70Kn) was so smooth and creamy that it had us scratching our heads wondering how they did it. The style is minimal-casual, with grey floor offsetting pale wood tables. Check the big central blackboard for an exhaustive list of wines from home and abroad.

→ Masarykova 26/1 (091 112 2215, facebook.com/haustorhaus)



Lari i Penati

Zagreb Restaurants

stew cooked in plum sauce which requires three days preparation is a much-loved choice and the veal (70kn) and baked lamb for two (170kn) are also well-prepared. The interior is as you'd find in the Dalmatian hinterland, with stone walls, red-checked tablecloths and dried tobacco leaves hanging from sturdy wooden beams. A meal for two with a litre of good house wine will run between 200kn and 250kn.

→ Mletačka 11 (01 4851 154, konoba-didovsan.com)

Lari i Penati

If you enjoy high-quality food served briskly in informal surroundings, then Lari i Penati (named after a pair of Roman household gods) will be the kind of place you'll find it difficult to stay away from. The only problem is its small size, with 12 high stools pressed against small tables and a street-facing window ledge. Succeed in grabbing a place and you'll be treated to a delectable and dizzyingly cheap range of sandwiches, soups-of-the-day (20kn), light main courses (a tasty fillet of fish can set you back as little as 70kn), and ribs and wings for around 40-45kn. There's also in-house cakes and muffins. What's on offer depends on the season and what the chefs feel like cooking that day – the menus are changed daily.

→ Petrinjska 42A (01 4655 776, laripenati.hr)

Le Mika

Crêperie Le Mika moved into new premises and expanded its menu too, becoming a cute French bistro as well as the best place in town to snaffle a plate of Crêpes Suzette. It's the pancakes that remain the big attraction. Savoury galettes made from buckwheat flour are supremely light and crispy, and come with an intelligently curated range of fillings: the galette with ratatouille and bacon (56Kn) was one of the most exiting light lunches we've had in quite a while. The choice of sweet pancakes takes up a good 50% of the menu, with the signature Crêpes Suzette heading up a list so tempting that it will have you genuinely stumped for choice. L'au monie (which comes with apple confit, bits of biscuit and a dollop of ice cream; 51Kn) is one of those confections that jumps off the menu and demands to be tried. Even if pancakes aren't your thing, Le Mika offers enough in the way of bistro fare to bring a constant procession of lunching

locals through the door, with onion soup (39Kn), quiche of the day (48Kn) and an exemplary Boeuf Bourignon (105Kn) among the regular orders. And as for non-crêpe desserts, the Crème Brûlée is perfection itself. It's a relatively snug and intimate space, with orb-like lamps hanging from a barrel-vaulted ceiling, a wall-hugging bench, and a two-person window ledge-cum-table that's well worth grabbing.

→ Teslina 14 (098 984 3395, lemika.hr)

L'oro di Napoli

Zagreb is so full of it's-quite-good-I-suppose pizzerias that it's often quite difficult to pull out a place that's really special. Located in a basement just north of Zagreb Cathedral, the Italian-run L'oro di Napoli might just fit the bill. The pies that are spaded out of its dome-topped oven are almost impossible to find fault with, sporting gorgeously leopard-spotted crusts and a just-the-right-side-of-sloppy range of traditional toppings. Italian-sourced

ingredients are used throughout: their Pizza Bufalina, generously spread with mozzarella from Campania water buffalo, serves as a reminder of just how exciting – both in texture and in flavour – real Italian mozzarella actually is. There's a floor-to-ceiling picture of Napoli on one wall and the rocky coast of Capri on another, but decor is otherwise on the functional side and not quite suited to a candlelit dinner. There will be an outdoor terrace in the courtyard come the spring.

→ Kaptol 27 (098 674 579).

Mali Bar

Mali Bar serves up exquisite lunches and inventive nibble food in an informal, five-table dining room. Main courses change daily. Everything else comes in the form of tapas – like small portions – grilled octopus, spring rolls, own recipe mini burgers and various salads. Superb desserts, too. Presiding over the kitchen is Ana Ugarković, prolific cookbook author and TV chef.

→ Vlaška 63 (01 5531 014, facebook.com/MaliBarZagreb)

Mano

Though called an Italian restaurant in local tourist brochures, Mano is actually a high-end steakhouse fit to bring your best girl to for an anniversary dinner or the business associate you're trying to impress. A better description of Mano – 'hand' in Italian (as in 'hand-made') – would likely be a fusion tribute to the grill. Fine cuts are grilled on charcoal in a kitchen set behind glass so that patrons can watch the process. Order the Steak Mano or T-bone and the waiter will bring the cut of meat, marinated in rosemary, olive oil and Dijon mustard, to your table with a mini-grill so that you can cook the steak to your own specifications. Simple, sleek and modish wooden chairs and tables sit on tongue-and-groove floors under exposed brick. The wines – a long, international list – are in a glass room for your inspection. Reservations recommended.

→ Medvedgradska 2 (01 4669 432, mano.hr)

Namaste

A spacious, light-filled and smartly presented upper floor restaurant, located ten minutes by tram to the west of the city centre, Namaste is the only restaurant serving what

most would recognise as authentic Indian cuisine in the city. So correct are the flavours, textures and balance of spices and herbs, that it's genuinely unsurprising to learn that both the owners and the kitchen staff come from India. Vegetarian cuisine is standard across much of India and Namaste excels in these (even carnivores really should try them). Mozzarella broccoli tandoori grilled is perhaps not cheap at 40 kuna, but is wonderfully spiced and perfectly cooked. Mains (80 kuna) come from across the continent, so Fish Goan Curry and Prawn Coconut Curry sit next to two rich mutton curries and the standard Butter Chicken on the menu, each served with rice and with optional flat roti breads. Again, the vegetarian mains (45-60 kuna), either cheese, vegetables or chickpea-based, are exceptional. Elsewhere there are spice-edged salads, a kids menu and a wide range of inviting sundries.

→ Selska cesta 217 (01 6264 458, namastezagreb.com)

NAV

If there is such a thing as contemporary Croatian cuisine then one of the best places to find it is NAV, the new venture of owner-chef Tvrtko Šakota. Previously seen brandishing the spoons at much-talked-about Mundaoka and Xató, Šakota has built an impressive reputation, not only for being an outstandingly creative chef, but also as a leading devotee of locally reared, high-quality produce. Pretty much everything we saw on the (seasonally changing) menu displayed a high degree of imagination and a high level of intricacy in preparation, kicking off with the cream-cheese profiterole that came as an (unbilled) amuse-bouche. The appetizer tells you straight away that NAV is all about attention to detail – not just from the people preparing the food, but from those sitting down to eat it too. The prices are eminently reasonable for what you're getting; and the 5- and 7-course tasting menus (290-390Kn) are well worth considering. Eating in a great restaurant is a bit like an outstanding theatre performance that leaves you with plenty to talk about after it's over – and in this sense NAV definitely fits the bill.

→ Masarykova 11 (01 202 9961, www.facebook.com/NavRestaurant)

Noel

Noel is a sizzling hot restaurant dedicated to contemporary trends in gastronomy. This upscale restaurant mixes the best of Croatian ingredients with nouvelle experimentation, offering mains like the pork belly with shrimp and passion fruit. Portions are small but well garnished and more extravagant diners can opt for the taster menu – options include four, six or nine courses costing between 220 and 450kn. The decor is polished, and the attentive staff boast military timing.

→ Dukljanina 1 (01 4844 297, noel.hr)

O'brok

At its simplest the Croatian word obrok means "meal", although it also comes with the connotation of something rather basic or straightforward, like army rations or school dinners. It's a neatly ironic introduction to what this small and intimate restaurant actually does, serving up quality food that suits the quick-luncher as well as those with time for several courses. The aim is to give Croatian cuisine a bit of contemporary style, but without losing sight of what's traditional about it. Four or five specials (65-90Kn) are chalked up on a board each day – old-school recipes like lung stew might feature alongside something a bit closer to the comfort zone, such as pork chop with mushrooms or lamb with peas. Mains are often accompanied with down-at-home extras that other restaurants no longer serve – such as žličnjaci, oddly shapen gnocchi-like things that soak up a good sauce. Baked štrukli, the central-Croatian dish comprising pockets of dough filled with cottage cheese, is something of a house speciality. White walls, pale wood and jazzy background music help to ensure a smooth, soothing experience.

→ Langov trg 6 (01/700 0355, www.facebook.com/RestoranObrok)

Okrugljak

The grande dame of Zagreb restaurants attracts old money and new jet set, munching and mingling in the two high-ceilinged wooden-clad halls in a suburb below Sljeme. Top-rated international and traditional dishes from the continent and the coast are prepared with special care – from juicy barbecue meats and uplifting blood sausages



Noel

to super-fresh tuna fillets and delectable swordfish carpaccios. Expect to see fresh lamb roasting away on spits in the yard on spring weekends. The pasta is made on the premises, while the wine list boasts more than 100 varieties. Reservations at weekends a must.

→ Mlinovi 28 (01 4674 112, okrugljak.hr)

Pingvin

Something of a Zagreb fast-food institution, Pingvin has been serving toasted sandwiches since 1987 and has long been considered the city's most dependable source of late-night munchies. It's disarmingly simple – just a service window and three rest-your-elbows tables in the entrance to a courtyard. It's also one of the first places where new arrivals get to try Croatia's famous dry-cured ham, the pršut and cheese combo (24Kn) being one of Pingvin's standard orders. You can also get hot dogs, burgers, tuna salads, simple grills (at 34Kn the fillet of sea bass is arguably the classiest option on the menu), and that Central European after-pub classic, cheese fried in breadcrumbs.

→ Teslina 7 (01 481 1446, www.facebook.com/Pingvin1987)

Pizzeria Karijola

The first Pizzeria Karijola opened was on the island of Vis, named

after the barrow porters used to ferry tourists' luggage. The hard-working owners made a point of using less salt and yeast, and fresher ingredients, most notably rocket, and success in Dalmatia soon followed. They then set up here in the capital, using the same formula only with more quality wines. The result is the best pizzeria in town, deservedly popular, handily located just over Savska near the Student Centre. There's another branch of Karijola at Vlaška 63, one floor up from the equally esteemed Mali Bar bistro.

→ Badalićeva 18 (01 3667 044), Vlaška 63 (01 5531 016, pizzeria-karijola.com)

Pod Zidom Bistro & Wine Bar

Mutating from a wine bar that did smart lunches to one of the city's leading gastro-bistros, Pod Zidom marched straight into the 2019 edition of the Michelin Guide and is now pretty much a must-visit when it comes to contemporary Croatian cooking. A lot of the credit goes to head chef Jurica Jantolek and his desire to investigate the creative possibilities of traditional food, retaining the local ingredients but throwing out any formulaic attitudes to their preparation. The menu certainly has an old-school local look about it at first glance, with oxtail, black

sausages, duck breast and buncek (pork hock) vying for attention alongside modish bistro-u-like regulars like beef cheeks and white fish. Best way to sample Pod Zidom's culinary approach is to opt for the three or four-course daily lunches (165-190), composed according to what they picked up that morning at Dolac. The bistro-wine bar informality of the place is well-maintained: the interior is bright, contemporary; service is brisk and informative; music tends towards the serious end of blues and jazz.

→ Pod Zidom 5 (099 325 3600, pod-zidom-bistro-wine-bar.business.site)

Rougemarin

Something of a cult among Zagreb carnivores on account of its delicious gourmet burgers, Rougemarin also serves top-notch bistro fare with a small menu of light but delectable meals strong on fish and healthy foods. Three-course set lunches with drink are well worth the 100kn outlay. Boutique Croatian wine, craft beers, and a small outdoor terrace provide further inducements to visit; located amid residential blocks just south of the Radnička cesta business district, it's not exactly central.

→ Folnegovićeva 10 (01 6187 776, rougemarin.hr)



NAV

Zagreb Restaurants

Rougemarin City

A polished restaurant offering surprisingly decent food for its opportune central location off Zagreb's main square. The menu changes daily, with fresh fish from Zagreb's Dolac market, less than 100 metres away. A choice of starters, like the fruity peach and tomato gazpacho or tuna tartar range from 30-60 kuna. Mains which regularly appear include risottos, tuna steak or well-constructed burgers, with most mains costing 70 or 80 kuna, although their signature burger is even cheaper. A choice of excellent Croatian craft beers, Varionica's pale ale or San Servolo's lager are on draught, decent white and red wines are available by the glass. → Petrinjska 2 (091 509 3191, facebook.com/rougemarincity)

Royal India

Pretty much everything you would expect from an Indian restaurant, with a dining room decorated in rich warm colours, a scattering of subcontinental objets d'art, and a menu that contains pretty much everything that will be familiar to a curry-house regular. Tandoor-cooked dishes are a speciality, the side-order options of rice dishes and naans are exemplary. There's also a lot here for vegetarians to choose from – something that is always worth underlining in a meat-obsessed city like Zagreb. → Tkalčićeva 26 (01 4680 965, facebook.com/RoyalIndiaAuthenticIndianCuisineZagreb)

Savica Casual Urban Eatery

Given the over-wordy title it might seem like they're trying to press too many trendy buttons at once, but don't let that put you off. This is an excellent addition to the

Zagreb bistro-lunch scene, and the fact that it's in Savica – a modern suburb with large housing blocks and a famously grassy park – gives it an extra dose of authenticity. The cuisine follows the current tendency to cultivate Croatian culinary tradition while adding a dash of global inspiration: our lean and juicy Lungić (a traditional cut of pork loin) came with a garnish of roast Sweet Potato, inducing one of those “why-didn't-I-think-of-that?” moments that had us experimenting in the kitchen when we got home. The Lungić in question was one of the hard-to-resist weekday specials (55-60Kn) that keep the place busy with the babble of lunchers. The full-bodied tomato soup (22Kn) is a signature staple that goes down well at any time of day. Mains in the 70-90Kn range stick to familiar meat, poultry and fish choices. Service is businesslike and breezy and it's a very pleasant place to sit, too, consisting of a small white-cube room and a larger glass-box atrium with leafy indoor plants perched beside pale wood tables. → Lastovska 38 (01 298 5658, www.savica.hr)

Sofra

The best Bosnian restaurant in town is hugely popular despite its hidden location in a residential quarter – take a taxi. Grilled meats are the order of the day here, pljeskavica and čevapi, served with traditional bread, although a 120kn plate for two might be the way to go. Dishes are designed to be shared and enjoyed slowly – allow a good two hours for your meal. Another branch can be found at Rudeška cesta 169A. → 1. Gardijske brigade Tigrovi 27 (01 6131 026), Rudeška 169A (01 3891 100, restoransofra.com)



Rougemarin City

Stara Vura

Located in an artfully-lit brick cellar beneath the exhibition halls of the City Museum, Stara Vura (“The Old Clock”) has the semi-hidden air of a select retreat. With tinkling piano music, attentive service and a starched-napkin approach to laying the table, it's the ideal venue for a leisurely and intimate meal. It's a slightly different experience in spring and summer, when diners move out into a cobbled courtyard filled with potted Mediterranean plants. The kitchen specializes in high-level Croatian food at reasonable cost: porky Croatian classics like punjeni lungić (tenderloin filled with cheese and pršut) weigh in at 85Kn. Adriatic seafood takes up a good page of the menu; they'll bring fresh fish out on a tray for you to peruse the daily offering. All in all it's a fine venue for a relaxed three-courser accompanied by a bottle or two of good local wine. → Opatička 20 (01 409 5875, www.staravura.hr)

Takenoko

The first sushi restaurant in Croatia, Takenoko is still one of the very few Asian restaurants in town worth experimenting with – and although it will set you back a wad of kunas

it is usually well worth it. Set on the ground floor of the Centar Kaptol mall, accessed from Medvedgradska, it's a swirl of mellow mood music mixed with the soft sound of chefs chopping behind a central cooking station. Leafy plants sit in tall vases around heavy wooden tables below track lighting. Try the Tokyo platter: 11 nori makis (tuna and salmon) and seven nigiris. There's a handsome choice of wok-fried dishes and some truly inventive exercises in east-west fusion, with fish, chicken and veal dressed in exotic spice combinations. Success here has led to a new branch being opened at Radnička cesta 37B. → Masarykova 22 (01 6463 385, takenoko.hr)

Time Restaurant & Bar

Occupying an oft-overlooked street corner just off the main square, Time is one of the trendiest restaurants in town. The extensive Asian-inspired fusion menu covers all the usual dishes: ramen, teriyaki, Thai green; but what really stands out is how they blend sizzlingly fresh Adriatic ingredients with a familiar cast of eastern dishes. Much of what is chucked into your pan comes from nearby Dolac market; succulently tender lamb hails from Pag island and



Zinfandel's

seafood is sourced from the coast. Fusion classics are served with flourish – and aren't eye-wateringly expensive either. The fancy interior would have you believe otherwise, what with its pricey lacquered furniture and low-key lighting. It's a very good place to work your way through a representative sample of the better Croatian wines; fans of international spirits and bubbly are also well catered for. → Petrinjska 7 (01 3333 660, timerestaurant.hr)

Tekka

Located in the Radnička cesta business district, Tekka attracts a sharp-suited clientele, and has cultivated the elegant decor and uber-attentive staff to go with it. The menu is near impeccable: sushi here is a masterful blend of flavour and finesse. For something with a bit more novelty, order from the Adriatic-Asian fusion section. The wine-list, featuring several Croatian award-winners, is well-tailored to the menu. It's neither central or cheap, but as one of Croatia's best sushi restaurants, it's worth the pilgrimage. → Radnička cesta 37B (01 6389 398, tekka.hr)

Trilogija

Trilogija sits just above the Stone Gate. Cobblestones lead from the door and inside. Tablissit on individual landings under vaulted, brick ceilings. The cosy dining room includes a bar area where folks can snack on a steak-and-cheese sandwich with caramelised onions (60kn). The idea is that even if you're in a hurry you can still enjoy a quality feed and glass of wine. More time lets you sample wonderful natural

ingredients. Daily specials change per artistic mood and supplies on hand; mains run from 75kn to 145kn. Entrée examples include sea bass in lobster sauce and beefsteak in port wine. As well, you won't regret the black tiger shrimp risotto with mango and spinach. For dessert, try the ravioli with sweet walnut filling. → Kamenita 5 (01 4851 394, entrilogija.weebly.com)

Submarine Burger

Can burger-flipping be a sustainable, ecologically responsible

industry? Well Submarine Burger is certainly giving it a go. The submariners pride themselves on making thick, succulent burgers from organic local beef, garnished with local škripavac cheese and veggies. Smokehouse (36kn), featuring bacon, mushrooms and smoked cheese, is just one of several imaginative combinations. Fast food this good should be enjoyed slowly – the mellow wooden-stool interior is a pleasant place to sit. → Frankopanska 11 (01 4831 500, submarineburger.com)



Submarine Burger

Zagreb Restaurants

Zinfandel's

Zinfandel's is an outstanding spot which transfers the elegance of Art Deco hotel, the Esplanade, built for the Orient Express back in 1925, to the dining room. Beneath the chandeliers, a pianist strokes the keys for a room overlooking the Oleander terrace. Dishes include duck, a daily selection of fresh fish, pan-roasted veal with foie gras or wild boar with a chestnut, truffle and pumpkin mousseline – the menu changes often to reflect the season. Sunday brunch buffet from noon runs the gamut – the best Croatian cheeses and sausage. Don't overlook in-house Le Bistro either, French in style and approach but with stand-out local štrukli. → Mihanovićeva 1 (01 4566 644, zinfandels.hr)

Zrno Bio Bistro

Hidden behind Kota, this smart bright bistro serves up dedicated vegan fare, with the accent on wok, noodle and pasta-based recipes. Ingredients are sourced from a local organic farm. There's a reasonable choice of desserts and the courtyard setting provides something of a calming oasis in this busy downtown neighbourhood. → Medulićeva 20 (01 4847 540, zrnobiobistro.hr)

BARS

Alcatraz

This place has been around for a few years and it's a real locals' hang-out. The interior of Alcatraz is crowded with American number plates, beer flags, and mannequins – one of which wears a Mick Jagger mask and seems to be a part of the party. The weekends see it packed with locals, who stop by for a myriad of bottled beers – loads of Belgian speciality brews alongside the excellent local Velebitsko – and the DJs jamming rock and dance tunes. There are also a slew of home-made rakijas (grappas) such as honey, cherry or blackcurrant. → Preradovićeve 12 (091 521 3703, facebook.com/CaffeBarAlcatrazZagreb)

Bacchus Jazz Bar

Just off the first square as you walk up from the station, the Bacchus Jazz Bar is an ideal place to meet friends, listen to jazz and either have a civilised party evening or get revved up for what's to come. Relaunched as a jazz bar in 2008

after several years on the social margins, the bar exudes a homely Dalmatian feel: there's a fig tree next to the terrace, which is tucked into a passage off the street. Inside you'll find a hodgepodge of wooden furniture: a 1960s-era television and telephone, and wooden-plank floors under a brick ceiling. It's almost always busy, so tables will be at a premium. Wines, mainly Dalmatian, have been chosen to suit the mood. There are cocktails too, but few pay them much attention. Live jazz on Fridays. → Trg kralja Tomislava 16 (091 587 2620, facebook.com/bacchusjazzbar)

Bikers Beer Factory

Providing another great reason to visit the nether regions of Savska cesta (Vintage Industrial Bar is one other), Bikers is by no means a niche bar for a niche public. Biking provides the design theme and indeed there's a motorbike repair shop at the same address, but the general atmosphere is one of easy going, alternative lifestyles plus rock'n'roll. The exposed brick interior contains a few post-industrial touches; there's a large

inner-courtyard beer garden; live rock/blues a couple of times a week. As far as the drink is concerned; there's Erdinger on tap, a good choice of bottled beers, and Perković rakijas on the spirits menu. → Savska 150 (099 848 5663, bikersbeerfactory.hr)

Booksa

Zagreb's prime literary club also doubles as a café, a collective run by two enthusiastic women. There is a symbolic membership fee of 10kn/year, but members can then enjoy WiFi, carefully chosen music, a laid-back atmosphere and regular events that include readings by the big beasts of the local literary scene – with occasional ones by visiting English speakers. Thursdays are reserved for unplugged concerts by local musicians. The twice-weekly Mercredi Français pulls in the capital's Francophone community. There's also a small library of English-language books. Good coffee and several varieties of leaf tea help to make Booksa well worth the quick tram ride or ten-minute walk from the centre. → Martićeva 14D (01 4616 124, klub.booksa.hr)

Botaničar

Botaničar is a stylish café, bar and sometimes art gallery near the botanical gardens. One of Zagreb's best-looking venues, the café is like a lookbook for retro furnishings; the well-lit room is scattered with '70s hairpin-legged tables and bright velvet sofas. The aesthetic theme is inspired by the nearby gardens: leafy plants are everywhere, with hanging creepers flowing out of oak cabinets. The drinks-only menu features coffee from Zagreb roasteries, a selection of craft beer and a respectable list of domestic wines. A soundtrack of gently jazzy music and the occasional chanson provides a relaxed, low-key atmosphere. The café gets buzzy when the after-work crowd arrive. An outdoor terrace overlooking the National Archives provides further inducement to visit in summer. → Trg Marka Marulića 6 (no number, facebook.com/botanicarzagreb)

Caffe Bar Finjak

The extravagantly decorated, cutesy Finjak is unique enough to attract custom from anywhere

in the city centre. A courtyard also helps. The drinks selection is extensive but geared towards daytime consumption: exotic teas, fine coffees, San Servolo and sought-after beers. → Vlaška 78 (098 130 0057, facebook.com/caffefinjak)

Cajt

One of the most popular neighbourhood cafes on the Vlaška strip, Cajt had a reputation for serving speciality beers well before the craft boom took hold, and it can still be relied upon to deliver a vast choice of bottles. If your favourite beer comes from an obscure Belgian brewery, you will probably find it here. As well as serving Munich's Augustiner on tap, Cajt has also embraced the new brews of the craft world, serving ales by local outfit Nova Runda on tap as well as bottles from the likes of Estonian Põhjala and Slovene Ressel. Bar staff are a mine of knowledge and advice. The interior décor marks out Cajt as something of a post-modern period piece, with a row of strangely upholstered two-person booths, obviously custom-made to squeeze in to the café's limited space. Only one minor drawback: Cajt is primarily a daytime meeting place, and can be rather quiet on week-nights. → Vlaška 68 (01 4617 023, www.facebook.com/CafeCajt)

Cogito Coffee

Flagship city-centre bar of the Cogito bean-roasting outfit, this recently opened clinic for unrepentant caffeine-a-holics is just off the main street, at the start of the mysterious, half-hidden passageway which leads from Varšavska through to Masarykova. Minimally decorated save for some salvaged furniture and a few pictures, it serves a hard-to-beat brew, plus leaf teas, some freshly-squeezed juices, and that's about it – although you will find muffins and cookies provided by the Piknik bakery and sandwich bar. Cogito have gone on to open new branches in Croatia and beyond, there's another café at Prilaz Gjure Deželića 40. → Varšavska 11 (no number, facebook.com/cogitocoffeeshop)

Crafter's Lav Zagreb (Kavana Lav)

Though this place shouldn't be difficult to discover – located above



Crafter's Lav Zagreb (Kavana Lav)

the Stone Gate and below St Mark's – it is, somehow, oft overlooked and thus a great find. The front room is an art gallery with local artists' works for sale. The back end of the building is a posh café (with seating in the front gallery as well) with Persian rugs thrown about, wooden floors and leather chairs. Beyond coffee, expect 15 sorts of tea, Leffe beer, wine and cognac. → Opatička 2 (01 4922 108, facebook.com/kavanalav02)

Dežman Mini Bar

Thanks to a gaggle of designer stores the narrow, arcade-like Dežmanova is fast becoming one of Zagreb's coolest addresses, an impression only bolstered by the opening of this chic new café-bar. The interior is as modernist as they come, but soothing with it. Matt-black walls jostle with warm woody tones, and geometric light fittings convey an arty bent. As far as the drinks are concerned the accent is very much on quality at a decent price – coffee is supplied by local direct-trade roasting outfit Cogito, beers include the locally brewed Zmajsko Pale Ale, long drinks a refreshing Bellini (25kn), and there's a good wine list with plenty of sparkling options. The cakes are hard to turn down, and there's an evening menu of pršut and cheese platters. This new bar is right next to their bistro too, which supplies excellent lunches and evening meals. Pop into the bar to relax after having eaten. → Dežmanova 3 (01 4846 160, dezman.hr)

Eli's Caffè

You are now entering Evolution Area' says the sign on the door, which leads through to a coolly minimal white space with a handful of tables grouped around the bar. For several years now Eli's

has been Zagreb's leading venue for quality coffee, leading a brown-stuff brewing revolution that is slowly spreading to the city's other bars. It is also one of the few café-bars that has remained 100% non-smoking, ensuring that you can actually taste and smell whatever it is you're drinking. A foxy young professional clientele gather here to gas, goss and guzzle coffee from 100% arabica beans selected and roasted by the café owner Nik Orosi, the country's first specialty coffee roaster and supplies a half-dozen cafés with enough taste to want the best coffee in town. → Ilica 63 (091 455 5608, eliscaffè.com)

Express Bar

A recent addition to the growing number of top-drawer cafés in the city centre, Express serves direct-trade coffee from several origins (the specific farm will probably be chalked up on a board) and organic

leaf teas. Decidedly mellow in atmosphere, it looks like a tiny place with room for only a handful of drinkers, but actually stretches back deep into the building with a long narrow corridor leading to a semi-hidden smokers' lounge right at the back. Outdoor seating on the pedestrianised bit of Petrinjska, and decent on-tap beer (Erdinger and O'Hara) ensure that it's a decent summer-evening spot too. → Petrinjska 4 (no number, facebook.com/expresszg)

Greenery Procaffè

'Central Zagreb' is becoming an increasingly broad geographical expression, thanks to a burgeoning archipelago of drinking venues sprouting up on the periphery. Located near the busy crossroads of Savska and Vukovarska, Greenery Procaffè functions perfectly as local meet-up for residents and office workers



Cogito Coffee



Caffe Bar Finjak

Zagreb Bars

as well as a destination café for urban explorers. A neat and welcoming L-shaped space with a first-floor gallery, it looks out on green hedgerows and leafy plants, pulling off the unusual trick of creating an intimate garden feel slap bang in the middle of a neighbourhood best known for its modernist buildings and grey blocks. As well as good coffee it takes tea drinkers more seriously than most Zagreb cafés, with a choice of quality brews. Gins and cocktails are Greenery's other strong suits – and with a big outdoor terrace occasionally massaged by the friendly rumble of passing trams, it could be a good place to linger once the warm weather comes.

→ Vukovarska 52E (095 350 5415, facebook.com/greeneryprocaffe)

Johann Franck

Once upon a time, a radio-era coffeehouse, the Gradska kavana, filled this side of Zagreb's main square. A landmark but long closed down, it has recently been replaced by Johann Franck, sponsored by the afore-named and venerable Zagreb brand of coffee. Calling itself a café, bistro, bar and club, it still operates as a prime meeting place in the capital, a contemporary spot in a city full of them but in a prime location and with a heritage second-to-none. Elements of the interior created Nedjeljko Mikac reflect this urban legacy, with an Art Deco chair dating back to 1927 and a space dedicated to the pioneering vehicles of Ferdinand Budicki. (Budicki was the first man in Zagreb to receive a fine for speeding – in 1901.) Just as this establishment has undergone an overall change of style, so it serves a more multi-purpose function. As well as a fully working kitchen, today's Johann Franck offers a full agenda of live performances, exhibitions, readings and sundry shows and screenings. Whether JF will achieve its aim of again becoming the vortex of social life in the capital is debatable – but this is certainly a step in the right direction. Its terrace, overlooking the statue of Ban Jelačić himself, will be busy come what may.

→ Trg bana Josipa Jelačića 9 (091 783 8153, johannfranck.hr)

Karibu Kaaawa

This is one of those places where the aroma of good coffee hits you as soon as you walk through



Johann Franck

the door. Just off the main street in Trešnjevka, a characterful Zagreb neighbourhood that's always worth a wander, Karibu is a winning example of how to make good use of a small space, with benches fashioned from planks of salvaged wood facing friendly staff behind a small bar. The coffee is supplied by independent roasters and usually includes at least one blended option and one single-origin brew (Guatemalan beans were hitting the grinder during our last visit). There are also some excellent fruit juices, own-recipe

iced tea, and a small but welcome selection of biscuits and tarts.

→ Ozaljska 34 (no number, facebook.com/karibukaawa)

KIC Club

It's been here for years, the 'Cultural Information Centre', but still attracts a loyal, bohemian following throughout the week. It's an art school vibe. Cultural activities centre on film screenings, photo exhibitions, book presentations and lectures. Drinks wise, there's Heineken on draught, though most settle for local bottled varieties; gemiš spritzers at 12kn,

and numerous teas. Many customers seem capable of making a single espresso last a whole afternoon.

→ Preradovičeva 5 (095 908 1621, facebook.com/KICKlub1)

Kino Europa Café & Grapperia

Built in 1924 and still retaining many of its period features, the 500-seater Kino Europa is the oldest still-functioning cinema in Zagreb. The grand auditorium is the main screening house for the Zagreb Film Festival in autumn, and serves as a first-run

and art-house cinema for the rest of the year. For those into grappas, good beer, quality coffee and excellent wines, the Europa's other principal attraction is the café that spills from the spacious lobby to a glass-enclosed atrium with big outdoor terrace. Patrons sitting in black directors' chairs are served honey, apple, pear, fig and cherry (to name a few) brandies. Club nights fill the foyer following the final film screenings on Friday and Saturday nights, with DJs spinning an eclectic mix of rock, pop and retro-disco.

→ Varšavska 3 (01 4872 888, kinoeuropa.hr)

Kolaž

This small, red-brick basement bar is decked out in wry, kitsch-but-cool details, with a veritable solar system of tiny mirrorballs hovering above the bar, and a seating area that – illuminated by tiny pinpricks of light emerging from bronze-yellow panels – looks like the inside of a huge honeycomb. During the day Kolaž serves coffee to local office workers and lawyers, while by night it fills up with a sophisticated bohemian set with an easy-going straight-gay-whatever sense of social orientation. The music ventures into similar areas of ambiguity, ranging from PJ Harvey to La Roux with all kinds of indie-rock, synthi-pop, electro-disco and exotica thrown into the mix. Rare Marinsko is among the beers, while the handsome array of spirits includes some fine local liquors – ruta (rue brandy) being a particular one-more-for-the-road favourite. Weekend nights can be a tight squeeze.

→ Amruševa 11 (01 4811 833, facebook.com/Caffe-bar-Kolaž)

Kulturni Centar Mesnička

One of those mildly eccentric places that give the Croatian capital its distinct but hard-to-put-into-words sense of character, Kulturni Centar Mesnička ("Mesnička Cultural Centre") is a vintage-style living-room bar with a side room devoted to art exhibitions and a live gig space (mostly jazz) in the cellar. With burgundy hues, barrel-vaulted ceiling, mismatched furniture and those cast-iron column radiators they don't seem to make anymore, it's a great place to mellow out. There's a full range of daytime and evening

drinks, with draught beers coming from increasingly inventive local brewers Crafters.

→ Mesnička 12 (091 767 6952, facebook.com/KCMesnicka)

La Bodega Wine & Tapas Bar

La Bodega represents the busy, café-lined Bogovičeva at its most chic; an artfully-designed wine bar whose outdoor terrace – set between incongruously rustic piles of logs – is constantly busy. Indoors, purple light bathes the fat legs of pršut ham hanging from the ceiling; old sewing machines, radios and TV sets jut from the walls. As the name suggests there's a comprehensive menu of wine and nibbles (there are plenty of Croatian wines by the glass from around 20Kn upwards); jazzy music by day, house-y music by night helps to set the tone.

→ Bogovičeva 5 (095 345 3445, labodega.hr/zagreb)

Noel Bar

Noel Bar is arguably Zagreb's most aesthetically pleasing place in which to enjoy a relaxing daytime brew. Designed by local architecture studio Penezić and Rogina, it's a great example of how to make the most of a small space, with a glass-cube bar area enfolded by a tiny L-shaped lounge with room for three or four tables. Wall-hugging green couches provide a simple and effective sense of comfort. An outdoor terrace with decking, sofas

and potted plants has the feel of a small urban garden, and is deservedly popular with local drinkers on languorous summer evenings.

→ Nikole Tomasića 13 (01 4844 297, facebook.com/noelbarzagreb)

Meet Mia

Done out in tones of blue, grey and light wood, this funky cake shop and café provides enough variety sweet treats and salty snacks to keep a regular, interesting and chatty clientele through the door from breakfast time to evening drinks. Pride of place, though, goes to the bright and inventive cakes on show, sold by the slice or as dainty, individual creations, topped by a sliver of strawberry or dollop of meringue.

→ Vlaška 43 (01 4683 823, facebook.com/meetmia)

Melin

The decor follows the guess-what-I-bought-at-the-flea-market school of interior design, with misfit furnishings, and hollowed-out TVs setting a pleasingly vintage tone. The choice of wines and spirits is excellent (it's less of a beer-drinkers joint than it used to be); your bill arrives tucked into the pages of a paperback book. The age range of the customers has risen slightly as a result of the makeover; although such is Melin's swim-against-the-tide nature that it remains a favourite of youngish

alternative types too.

→ Kožarska 19 (no number, melinbar.business.site)

MK Bar

Known by all as 'Krolo' after the writer Miroslav Krleža who lived here, this beautiful old wooden bar near the main square gives its many patrons a flavour of pre-1991 Zagreb. The bar staff are easy-going, the inviting older clientele religiously scan the day's newspapers and the younger regulars gather round the semicircular bar. No DJs, no hipster-attracting tricks, but still crowded and raucous at weekends. Timeless is the word you're looking for.

→ Radičeva 7 (no number, facebook.com/pages/MK-Krolo)

Mr. Fogg

Arguably Zagreb's first steam-punk bar – a concept, perhaps, nobody really asked for – Mr. Fogg is garishly fun, what with its theatrical set-design pieces based on the theme of Jules Verne's 'Around the World in 80 Days'. It's USP is a range of international teas, exotic varieties of gin and a decent craft beer menu.

→ Martičeva 31 (no number, facebook.com/BarMrFogg)

Old Pharmacy Pub

A classic-looking old pub: a mirror behind the brass



Karibu Kaaawa



Dežman Mini Bar

Zagreb Bars

bar, pharmacy-related sepia photographs and vintage adverts crowding the walls, and dark wood everywhere. A couple of screens are tuned to football matches on big European nights, although they're unobtrusive enough not to ruin the evening for non-sporty types. The no-smoking section in the back is full of leather armchairs and cosy corners, perfect for an intimate chinwag. There is a wide assortment of beers but also, and importantly, a menu of Irish whiskeys, scotches and bourbons. Nice place to start the evening with a band of good friends.

→ Andrije Hebranga 11A (091 245 6183, facebook.com/oldpharmacypub)

Pod starim krovovima

One of Zagreb's classic watering holes, patronised by writers and actors since the 19th century, Kod Žnidaršića looks every inch the part, with its bare pine floor, wooden panelling, timber-beamed ceiling and old-style ceramic stove. It's one of the few bars in the Upper Town that has successfully held on to a regular late-night clientele, with art exhibitions and sporadic concerts helping to keep the bohemian spirit buoyant. With hard-to-get Vukovarsko beer on draft, and a handsome list of rakijas and wines, it's certainly the right place for the discerning drinker; while the baguette sandwiches will take care of any lingering hunger.

→ Basaričekova 9 (01 4851 808, facebook.com/KodSnidarsica)

Pod Zidom Bistro & Wine Bar

Pod Zidom has effortlessly elbowed its way to the top of the wine-bar league, offering an affordable-to-expensive mixture of great Croatian wines and a wonderful outdoor terrace overlooking a street that's very central but also slightly hidden from the hubbub of the main square. Done out in a mixture of greys and pale wood tones, it manages to look smart but laid back at the same time.

→ Pod Zidom 5 (099 325 3600, pod-zidom-bistro-wine-bar.business.site)

Program

If quirky, imaginatively-designed cafés are what you're after then Martićeva is the place to find them. Just a few doors away from local cultural hub Booksa,



Pod Zidom Bistro & Wine Bar

Program is run by the same people who brought you the late lamented Divas, the famously eccentric living-room-gone-bonkers café that arguably set the whole Martićeva trend rolling. Program goes for a rather novel refurbishment-in-progress look, with (totally unnecessary) scaffolding in the middle of the room and bags of builders' cement stacked under the tables. Artwork on the walls and pink chairs on the ceiling provide an additional degree of abnormality, without taking anything away from the café's eminently comfortable and relaxing vibe. The coffee is good; the cakes look a bit on the heavy-duty side at first sight but turn out delightfully soft and springy when they're on the end of your fork.

→ Martićeva 14 (098 993 8279, facebook.com/programbar)

Pupitres

Established by qualified sommelier and long-standing Croatian wine enthusiast Jelena Simić Valentić, Pupitres is a great place to taste your way through the best tipples the country has to offer. A small intimate space with a jazzy soundtrack and only a handful of tables (it's wise to reserve at weekends), it's well set up for a long relaxing evening. Despite being geared towards wine buffs it's certainly not intimidating to those who aren't – the recommended selection of whites and reds cover a good range of vintages and prices, with the cheapest options starting

at a very reasonable 18kn per glass. The 2-person platter of cold-cuts and olives (85kn) is the standard accompanying order, although more substantial tapas-style dishes are also available.

→ Frankopanska 1 (01 4848 568, pupitres.hr)

Quahwa

Quahwa treat coffee with the reverence it deserves. One of the few independent roasters in town, Quahwa an easy walk from the main square, located in an attractive courtyard on Teslina. The beans, organic Arabica, are imported from Ethiopia and roasted in the café downstairs. Upstairs, the minimalist interior is cool without feeling cold: cushy '70s armchairs and hairpin-legged tables are strewn haphazardly about the polished parquet. Coffee is slightly more expensive than what you'll find in the cafés clustering around nearby Cvjetni trg. The difference in quality is obvious and worth the few extra kuna. Beyond coffee, Matcha-lattes, specialty liquors and excellent craft beers provide a respectable list of alternatives.

→ Teslina 9 (no number, facebook.com/quahwacoffeeonly)

Rakhia Bar

This first-floor flat in a charming old Tkalčićeva building has been transformed into an agreeable warren of quirkily decorated sitting rooms, with mix-and-match furnishings, paintings on the walls, and agreeably low-key

lighting. There's also outdoor seating in a slightly raised garden overlooking one of the busiest stretches of this bar-filled street. Rakijas are the stars of the show: if there's a fruit or vegetable that you can make brandy out of then rest assured that it will be on the menu here somewhere. Bottled beers include the excellent Velebitsko pivo and the boutique-brewed Visibabara range.

→ Tkalčićeva 45 (095 919 3469, facebook.com/RAKHIA-Bar-Zagreb)

Ro & Do

Long considered a cult destination on Zagreb's craft-beer strip of Opatovina, Ro & Do has upped and moved to a new location opposite Britanski trg market. It has lost its snug wood-paneled interior, but gained a much bigger courtyard terrace – which might make it into a key destination as the Zagreb summer takes hold. The basement location is bigger than their previous space but still has the feel of an intimate speakeasy. It formerly served as a French bistro and then a wine bar, and there's an improvised look about an interior that contains murals and furnishings inherited from previous owners. Ro & Do retains its distinctive character however, thanks to its gregarious, guest-greeting owner, a sizeable cast of regulars who have clearly been frequenting Ro & Do for a long time, and the sense that there is always something to do here other than just drink – after-work DJ sets, quiz



The Garden Brewery

nights, occasional gigs or sport on TV. A well-kept selection of crafts is still a key plank of Ro & Do's appeal, with ales from Bjelovar's Zepelin brewery and Zagreb's Pulfer currently ruling the bar.

→ Ilica 73 (091 411 1113, facebook.com/Ro.Do.Zagreb)

Sedmica

Cult bar Sedmica does little to advertise its presence on the street. The clue is a small sign above a residential doorway. It's the meeting place of people from the creative arts, an obvious rendezvous spot before a private view at a trendy gallery or for an impromptu cast party. You enter through a corridor lined with concert and exhibition posters. Inside, a small room contains a crowded bar counter upon which stand taps of Fischer's and Erdinger. Long, thin marble tables provide a place to prop, otherwise you can join the boho crew on the wrought-iron mezzanine behind.

→ Kačićeva 7A (01 4846 689, caffebar-sedmica.com)

Sheridan's Pub

Compared to Vienna, Budapest or Ljubljana, Zagreb contains a relatively modest number of faux pubs. This is the best of a motley bunch – and the best loved. Cosy, communal and staffed by sweethearts, Sheridan's encourages a loyal if limited regular custom with pub quizzes and craft brews to complement the mainstay draught option of O'Hara's – the nearest you'll find to Guinness. Darts, TV football

and occasional live music sessions provide further entertainment.

→ Savska 36 (095 868 8553, sheridanszagreb.com)

SPUNK

Located under the gleaming glass-and-steel National University Library (NSK), it's a coffee-break bar for students during the day, and an alternative music bar serving discerning bohós by night. The interior features comic-book murals by Igor Hofbauer, vintage movie posters and twinkling ceiling panels that look like the sky at night. Indie and cover bands occasionally squeeze into the corner of the room; DJs spin garage-rock discs at weekends.

→ Hrvatske bratske zajednice b.b. (01 6151 528, facebook.com/Spunk)

The Beertija

Opened in autumn 2012, the Beertija was one of the winning courtyard terrace locations of the 2013 outdoor drinking season. While the terrace sits behind trees and shrubs protected from the busy road, main body of the bar itself is in a neighbouring basement. Decked out in a mixture of red-brick and grey, it's pretty post-industrial – there's a glass-wall smoking tank in one corner for days when it's too cold or wet to light up outside. As the name suggests (Beertija is a play on words based on the term birtija, a kind of Balkan pub), the accent is on amber liquids, with a simply mind-boggling choice of local and imported ales. This is probably

Zagreb Bars

the only place in town where both Newcastle Brown and cult Montenegrin Nikšićko pivo crop up on the same menu, alongside all manner of heady dark liquids dreamt up by crafty Belgian monks. There's also a list of beer snacks that run from garlic bread to smoked pork hock, and a rock/alternative soundtrack that seems to go perfectly with this kind of food and drink.

→ Pavla Hatza 16 (01 4839 020, facebook.com/thebeertija)

The Garden Brewery

The Garden Brewery – run by the team behind the legendary Garden Festival and its various off-shots, is a special addition to Croatia's craft beer scene. Housed in an old red brick factory in Zagreb's industrial east, it's a lively, characterful venue for after-work drinks, club nights and family-friendly events. The lovingly brewed beers on tap include a zesty Citrus Pale ale, IPA, stout and an award-winning porter to please the most discerning craft beer geek. For food, the Garden team have drafted in Submarine. Their gourmet burgers are the best in Zagreb, and perfectly paired with a cold beer. Every weekend the brewery throws an open armed party – head there on Saturdays for DJ-led club nights, and go back on Sunday with the kids.

→ Slavenska avenija 22F (01 5634 100, thegarden.hr/brewery)

U dvorištu

Hidden in an off-street courtyard, this mellow café next to a music shop has quickly built a regular clientele since opening in mid-2011.

They take their (free-trade, Ethiopian) coffee very seriously, and serious caffeine addicts will trek halfway across the city to get their regular fix. With poetry readings, jazz in the evenings and art on the walls, it's something of a cult cultural hub into the bargain. The discerning drinks menu marks this spot out as more than just a regular boozier; with Erdinger, Fischers and O'Hara stout on draught.

→ Jurja Žerjavića 7 (no number, cogitocoffee.com)

Vinyl

Occupying one of the best pitches in central Zagreb, right in the middle of the pedestrianised strip opposite the Grounded Sun sculpture, newly opened Vinyl is a bit like a rambling apartment, with five separate rooms on the main floor and a live music and events room downstairs. Each is decorated in a slightly different style. The drinks menu is big on whiskies; among the bottled beers, look out for Rock and Roll (17kn), an extremely palatable red variety from Daruvar in eastern Croatia. The previous tenant of this roomy property was a Japanese restaurant, which helps to explain the samurai-fixated graphic art on the walls of the back bar. The weekly schedule includes live music on Wednesdays, literary reading on Thursdays, vinyl-only DJs at weekends, and – perhaps uniquely for a Zagreb café – the 'Flying Bookshop' second-hand book exchange on Monday evenings.

→ Bogovičeva 3 (01 2385 421, facebook.com/vinylzagreb)



Vinyl

NIGHTLIFE

AKC Medika

Still going strong despite the municipal authorities' threat to dramatically raise the rent, this shrine to all things alternative grew out of Zagreb's anarchist movement and is still run as a non-profit-making collective. A courtyard decorated by some of Zagreb's best street artists has a café-bar on one side, and a concert venue-cum-clubspace on the other. Events range from anarcho-punk gigs to dub reggae DJs and cutting-edge dance music, with all kinds of other styles thrown in for good measure. Visual arts association Otomptom throw impromptu film evenings screening animation and shorts. Popular with a broad spectrum of Zagreb's club-hungry youth, Medika is much more than just a gathering point for the grungey underground.

→ Pierottijeva 11 (01 6197 223, attack.hr)

Aquarius

The one club on the Jarun lakeside to be open 12 months a year, this 2,000-capacity, two-floor venue, which opened in 1992, is still ahead of the field. This is largely due to its commitment to mixing danceable beats with innovative DJ styles, augmented by a regular agenda of live music (with international rock and world music predominating) and DJ sets by international big names. The two floors – Aquarius 1 and 2 – pump different sounds but do, on occasion, come together. Friday might feature anything from Goa Trance to RnB (check the website), while Saturdays usually see an eclectic mixture of cutting-edge House and electro presided over by chief resident DJ Martyn Negro. In summer, Aquarius opens its beach branch at Zrće at Novalja on Pag. Entrance fees range from 30kn for club nights to 120kn for gigs.

→ Matije Ljubeka b.b. (01 3640 231, facebook.com/aquariusklub)

Boogaloo

A 15-minute walk south of the train station, Boogaloo is a 1,500-capacity DJ club and live venue, opened in a spacious former cinema and cultural centre – scene of seminal shows by Laibach



Boogaloo

and Einstürzende Neubauten in the mid-1980s. Expect a varied schedule of retro parties, house or techno DJs, and live international metal acts.

→ Vukovarska 68 (no number, boogaloo.hr)

Funk Club

A rather tatty-looking café-bar by day, by night the Funk Club is lively indeed. Spontaneous interaction sparks around a horseshoe-shaped bar, while thumping beats come up from the cellar. Down a spiral staircase, in a small plain basement with stone-vaulted ceilings, DJs spin catchy tunes (house, jazz and broken beats) to a dance-happy crowd Tuesdays through Saturdays.

→ Tkalčićeva 56 (no number, facebook.com/funkklub)

Gallery

One of the snazziest clubs by Lake Jarun – and in Zagreb – Gallery has hosted DJs such as Ian Pooley, David Guetta and Martin Solveig. The interior is funky-chic and filled with chandeliers and candelabras. Big doormen keep a tight control on numbers and enforce a dress code (no trainers or jogging suits, please). Once you pass the face test, you get to rub shoulders with local bling, actors, sports stars and the odd random hipster thrown in. Fridays are devoted to hip hop and r'n'b, while Saturdays are dedicated to house. The wooden terrace is a boon. If you're in, it's fun. Typical cover charge: 30kn for women and 40kn for men.

→ Matije Ljubeka 33 (099 444 2444, gallery.hr)

Hangar Club

One of the most enjoyable places for mainstream weekend clubbing with a no-nonsense, dancefloor-filling DJ style, a lighting rig that must have cost a few bob, and a fair share of wacky party ideas. Hangar is an apt description for the large, minimally decorated main room. A centrally located main bar and relative absence of tables and alcoves gets everybody mingling and dancing.

→ Florijana Andrašeca 14 (099 655 2066, facebook.com/hangarclubzg)

Jabuka

Everyone knows the Apple, where a generation of thirty- and fortysomethings danced and found romance a decade or two ago. This grungy Tužkanac club, set in one of the nicest neighbourhoods in town, has a worn-in feel and still offers the rocking sounds of the 1980s in its modest dance room with multi-coloured spotlights. DJs mix in R&B and soulful tunes with New Wave, Eighties and other retro genres as a mixed-age crowd jiggle and writhe about the bar and the expansive back courtyard. There are occasional live bands and half-litres of domestic beer run at 16kn. It's a beautiful 20-minute walk due north from the centre or a quick taxi.

→ Jabukovac 28 (no number, facebook.com/GKJabuka)

KSET

KSET is an excellent, adventurous venue for live music and DJs,

with events taking place three or four nights a week. Well worth the hassle of finding, KSET has actively promoted new bands for decades, an oasis for underground, post-rock, Americana, avant-jazz, punk, rap, ethno and lots of other stylistically diverse artists. With a 400-person capacity this intimate and friendly space is the ideal venue in which to catch a band on the cusp of the big time. The choice of drinks is limited to beer, wine and fruit juices, but prices are rock-bottom.

→ Unska 3 (no number, kset.org)

Masters

The intimate Masters is located next to the clay courts of the Maksimir Tennis Centre and in a loft bedecked with wooden floors and a tree-house-style bar. The DJ presides over a relaxed vibe and offers music from deep house to dub, techno to reggae. International names make appearances here in this relatively secret dance enclave. Check Facebook page for events.

→ Maksimirska 132 (no number, facebook.com/masters.zagreb)

Močvara

Legendary venue that has hosted innumerable international names (the Buzzcocks, Jonathan Richman, Einstürzende Neubauten and Mogwai to name but four) alongside virtually anybody that matters on the domestic musical scene, Močvara, 'the Swamp', is where young alternatives gather for underground fun and a wide



The Garden Brewery

variety of live music acts. Set on the banks of the Sava, it holds about 600 people in an abandoned factory imaginatively muralled by graphic artist Igor Hofbauer. The programme ranges from live punk, metal, world and ethno music to retro-DJ nights, gothic parties, alternative theatre and mind-bending one-night-only art exhibitions. Entrance ranges from free to 100kn depending on what's on (check the website).

→ Trnjanski nasip b.b. (01 6159 667, močvara.hr)

Pločnik

As much a bar as it is an essential hub for alternative culture. Pločnik is run by event promoters Pozitivan ritam, and it's one of the few places in the city where you can hear afrobeat, dancehall or grime music. The music programme is dizzyingly diverse and there's usually something happening in the bar's basement. Depending on the day of the week, it could be open-mic, live dub music or a large crowd gyrating to drum and bass. An upbeat

vibe and reasonably priced craft beer on tap (Nova Runda and The Garden) makes Pločnik a reliable choice.

→ Medimurska ulica 21 (091 430 0733, pozitivanritam.hr/plocnik)

Sax

Opened a decade ago, Sax is one of the best spots in town to see live bands. Different nights of the week are devoted to different genres, with up-and-coming indie bands playing on Tuesdays, jazz, classic rock and dance-oriented DJs filling out the rest of the schedule. The stage is big and the venue is spacious and awash in orange with plenty of booths for the partied-out and also plenty of room for dancing. The crowd here is JJ Cale-mellow and half-litres of Tuborg are only 16kn. Sometimes free, sometimes 20kn or more on the door depending on who is playing.

→ Palmotičeva 22/2 (01 4872 836, sax-zg.hr)

The Garden Brewery

As well as leading the way in Zagreb's embryonic craft beer scene, The Garden Brewery doubles up as an excellent late-night spot, attracting hip-hop legends, international DJ's and the cream of local talent to the industrial eastern estate of Žitnjak.

→ Slavenska 22F (01 5634 100, thegarden.hr)

Tvornica kulture

Tvornica kulture ('The Culture Factory') has established itself as Zagreb's leading medium-sized venue for live rock and pop. The fashionably black, 1,800-capacity main hall (Veliki pogon, 'Large Workshop') has now been augmented by the addition of a much more intimate small hall (Mali pogon), which hosts gigs by local bands and disc-spinning after-parties. Mali pogon also works as a café during the day. Concerts take place several times a week, with club nights featuring DJs and visuals at weekends. Ticket prices range from 35kn to 200kn depending on who is playing. Draught beer 15kn, imported Czech Budweiser in bottles 20kn.

→ Šubićeva 2 (01 4678 389, tvornicakulture.com)

Vintage Industrial Bar

This capacious new music bar occupying a former button factory opened its doors to deserved media fanfare in December 2012. The interior preserves the concrete, exposed brick and metal girders of the original factory floor, but clever lighting and comfortable seating ensures that this is far from being a minimalist post-industrial experience. The long (indeed extraordinarily long) bar serves beers from the Ožujkski stable, alongside Leffe in bottles, Erdinger on draught, and the full range of Perković rakijas. With regular gigs and DJ events take place in the adjoining hall, it's the ideal place for a rock-and-roll night out.

→ Savska 160 (01 4819 375, vintageindustrial-bar.com)

Željezničar

Littered with old industrial buildings too costly to renovate, Zagreb is a veritable paradise of potential warehouse rave spaces. Željezničar, meaning railway worker, is extremely large, with at least three floors available for parties, but their use, and indeed whether the club will open, very much depends on the party. Usually, only open on weekend nights, but not open reliably on every Friday and Saturday, its soundtrack is usually dark and speedy rave sounds, old school, Goa and psytrance, hard trance and dub, but you can also find techno nights here.

→ Trnjanska 1 (no number, facebook.com/KlubZeljeznicar)



Tvornica kulture

SHOPPING

A'Marie

Croatian Ana Marija Brkić established her own fashion label for womenswear in 2002, quickly establishing a reputation for understated glamour and subtle chic. She is also one of Croatia's leading designers of spectacles and sunglasses. You can see her creations in her tiny but elegant, white-walled shop just a few blocks south and east of the main square. Alongside the current season's collection of casual and eveningwear, there are also handbags, belts and bracelets on display. → Gundulićeva 19 (01 4873 524, amarie-fashion.com)

Arena Centar

This huge shopping centre in south-west Zagreb is home to 200 shops and kiosks, and includes several of the big brands present in Croatia, including fashion retailers Inditex/Zara, H&M and LPP/Reserved as well as Mohito, Sinsay, Cropp and House. The large hypermarket, the international food court and various cafés are your options if you're hungry; if you're looking for entertainment, there's the Game World Casino and the Cinestar Multiplex Cinema offers 3D, IMAX, and Samsung 4DX screenings. There are allocated play areas for children, and around three thousand parking spaces; the centre also runs its own free bus service and is easily accessible by public transport. In summer time a green patio area with water fountain provides the opportunity to relax. → Vice Vukova 6 (01 6661 411, arenacentar.hr)

bio&bio

Zagreb's first ethical, organic health-food store serves products made to macrobiotic and vegetarian principles. Now with branches in Split, Dubrovnik and Rijeka, plus three others in Zagreb, bio&bio offers natural and organic food and food supplements, and natural cosmetics. They are also book publishers, and run classes for yoga and similar activities. → Various city locations (0800 246 246, biobio.hr)

Bonkulović Delikatese

On level two of the Kaptol Centar mall, between Tkalčićeva and Nova Ves, Bonkulović is one of the

few true gastro speciality shops in Croatia. It's here that locals come to find French cheese, champagne, Tuscan salami, designer pasta, and single-plantation-cocoa-bean chocolate. There are a lot of niche Croatian products too, including Tomac sparkling wine from the Plešivica region, a range of flavoured rakijas from the Perković distillery, and Brachia olive oil from the Dalmatian island of Brač. → Nova Ves 17 (01 4860 789, bonkulovic.com)

Bornstein

Now run by an enthusiastic and friendly young couple, Bornstein is the best wine boutique in Zagreb and potentially in all of Croatia. It opened in 1990 on Pantovčak, the first private enoteca in all of former Yugoslavia, selling only wines from private producers. Some 24 years later, the store is filled with labels from every region of Croatia, and clear advice on their qualities is offered willingly. The shop also stocks truffles, honey and olive oils, making it a handy one-stop shop for quality souvenirs. Bornstein, the original location, can be found just above Britanski trg at Pantovčak 9. → Kaptol 19 (01 4812 361, bornstein.hr)

Boudoir

Run by delightful twins and designers Morana and Martina, Boudoir has been open for more than ten years. It sits on the cobble street running parallel to Tkalčićeva and up to the Stone Gate. Inside the shop – where their grandmother once made women's hats – are one-of-a-kind designs, which combine funkiness with satin and lace, elegance with Moulin Rouge and the little black dress with the MTV music awards. Their customers are both international and Croats, with locals usually reserving their purchases for special events. The pair, like their grandmother, design hats, which are also displayed. Dresses are priced from 2,000kn to 12,000kn. → Radićeva 22 (091 481 3464, boudoir.hr)

Cahun

This long-standing family business certainly boasts one of Zagreb's best shop signs, with an amusing graphic of a top-hatted gent with a monocle hanging over the entrance. Cahun's hand-crafted hats cover all the classic styles, although the fantastic range of summer headgear is perhaps its strongest suit. The straw boaters,



straw panamas and straw fedoras on offer here exude a timeless glamour and are several cuts above the generic straw-hat gear you will find at street markets at seaside resort. Accessorize with Cahun's hat bands and turban-wraps to recreate that art-deco movie-poster look. → Vlaška 59 (01 4814 975, no webpage)

Crop

This is a very well stocked delicatessen concentrating on the quality side of authentic Croatian food and drink. There are wines, olive oils, cheeses and honeys in abundance. The rakija selection includes a weird, peppery, olive-flavoured variety you're unlikely to find anywhere else. There's a wide range of seductive sweet things made by Rab-based chocolatier Vilma (including chocolate with Pag cheese). Other little extravagances you should look out for include smokvenjak, compressed fig cake, and Rapska torta, a pastry-wrapped cake rich in marzipan. → Tkalčićeva 28 (091 533 8233, facebook.com/CropAuthenticCroatianGifts)

Cvjetni Centar

Opened somewhat controversially in 2011 (the access ramp to Cvjetni's underground car park ate up a much loved chunk of pedestrian precinct), this three-storey mall contains many of the international brand names that have colonised European city centres in the last two decades. → Preradovićeva 6 (no number, centarcvjetni.hr)

Dancing Bear

A music store at its core, Dancing Bear is also a great place to shop for T-shirts, movies and music-video DVDs. Naturally CDs predominate, spread across the red walls of its two floors. Local songbirds as well as international blues, jazz, rock and classical fill the racks. Old-schoolers will be happy to find a substantial vinyl selection. → Gundulićeva 7 (01 2302 623, dancingbear.hr)

Deliicije

The first of what is now a multi-shop operation around Croatia, Deliicije stock quality chocolate, cakes, biscuits and

sweets from famous European brands. From French Henaff to Swiss Lindt, English Mackays to Belgian Hamlet, there's certainly something for everyone.

→ Various city locations (01 7899 590, deliicije.com)

Dolac

The daily market, on a raised square a set of stairs up from Jelačić, has been the city's major trading place since 1926. Farmers from surrounding villages come to sell their home-made foodstuffs and some of the freshest fruit and vegetables you'll ever taste. In the covered market downstairs are butchers, fishmongers and old ladies selling the local speciality (cheese and cream). Flowers and lace are also widely available. Alongside, the renovated fish market, ribarnica, sells fresh produce every day but Monday. → Dolac 9 (01 6422 501, trznice-zg.hr)

ELFS

This is the main city-centre outlet for a deservedly successful local fashion label launched by young Zagreb design tandem Ivan Tandarić and Aleksandar Šekuljica. Incorporating an ironic take on today's bling culture, ELFS play with elements of kitsch without going too far over the top, producing clothes that are fun, sexy and wearable. As well as frocks, bags and tights for the gals, the shop stocks hooded tops for

the guys, and baby grows for infant followers of fashion. → Amruševa 19 (01 4816 182, elfs.hr)

Etna Maar

The brainchild of Croatian, Italian and UK-trained designer Andrijana Subotić Pjajcik, the Etna Maar label produces coolly minimalist and eminently wearable dresses in black, reds and greys; alongside some highly desirable leather bags. The name comes from Dora Maar, Croatian-born muse of Pablo Picasso. The Blau Lines shop on Radićeva is one of the best places to find Etna Maar clothes and accessories. → Ilica 82 (01 7000 345, etnamaar.com)

Franja

Primarily known for its coffee beans and leaf tea, Franja is also a good place to pick up Croatian delicatessen products, including quality wines, traditional biscuits, and single-plantation olive oils from all over the country. → Vlaška 62 (01 4573 235, Heinzlova 6B (01 4616 744, franja.hr)

Free Bird

Based here since 1999, secondhand music shop Free Bird is run by Tomislav Gaži, who stocks 5,000 LPs and 2,500 CDs covering all musical genres. It has a fast turnover with buy-outs of big collections, weekly sales and old hi-fi equipment. → Tratinska 50 (01 3821 870, freebird.hr)

Greencajg

Near Kvatrić market, this new store sells organic and alternative deli products with strong emphasis on the Croatian, rather than the imported. The name is Croatian dialect for German Grünzeug, all that 'green stuff' that goes into soups and stews to give them a strong savoury flavour. You can indeed stock up on bio veg here, although it's the deli fare – olive oils, marinades, preserves – that make a visit here worthwhile. Speciality items include bottles of gloppy baby food made from organic ingredients, and the demonic, tongue-broiling chili sauces made by Croatian firms Alpinos and Volim Ljuto. Greencajg is the ideal place to pick up hemp products (hemp oil, hemp flour, hemp tea), as well as the nutty flavoured, locally grown and milled pumpkin-seed flour, perfect for making gluten-free bread and cakes. → Heinzlova 4 (097 631 4737, greencajg.hr)

Importanne Galleria

This three-storey building, just east of the main square, was the second mall to open in Croatia. There is underground parking too. → Iblerov trg 10 (01 4619 503, importannegalleria.hr)

Intera

Long Zagreb's main outlet for the cooler end of Italian furniture design, the shop also stocks

the Element line of furniture created specifically for Intera by Austrian-Croatian design group Numen/For Use. Numen's talent for executing deceptively simple shapes in trusty-looking chunks of oak and walnut is showcased in a range of beds, tables and storage units. The x-shaped magazine racks and disarmingly wonky-looking bookshelves are eminently affordable – and sufficiently portable to be carried home. Intera also stocks the wiry-looking lamp stands made by Zagreb design collective Grupa. → Ilica 168A (01 3906 855, intera.hr)

Jesenski & Turk

With another branch at Preradovićeva 5 in the city centre, Jesenski & Turk is the best stocked and most browser-friendly of Zagreb's second-hand bookshops, with a clearly arranged selection of old prints, antiquarian titles, English-language novels and attractively illustrated art and photography books. → Preradovićeva 5 (01 4876 897), Vukotinovićeva 4 (01 4826 233, jesenski-turk.hr)

Jewellery Store Bashota

Founded in 1924, family firm Bashota excels in the kind of filigree earrings and coral necklaces that are typical of Zagreb's traditional jewellery scene. More recently they have become famous for their line of gold and silver brooches based in traditional Zagreb motifs such as red-and-blue stripe Šestine umbrellas, gingerbread hearts, and other folk symbols. → Ilica 37 (01 4833 109, insightdesignguide.com)

Juice Box

This is a misleadingly simple name for what is actually an Aladdin's cave of the good things in life, from organic fruit and veg to fair-trade coffee, soya beans, olive and other vegetable oils, and crunchy crisps made out of apple, pineapple and other healthy things. Freshly made fruit and vegetable juices are the star attraction, with Juice Box's own-recipe cocktails sold in picnic-ready bottles. Also on sale are locally made pastas flavoured with nettle or hemp, cooking ingredients that you can't get anywhere else, such as ghee and, perhaps uniquely for Zagreb, healthy Vau Torte biscuits for dogs. → Various city locations (juicebox.hr)



Zagreb Shopping

Kaptol Centar

Past the Cathedral, this is arguably the most exclusive and certainly the best-known of Zagreb's many malls. You can expect to find outlets for major chains, as well as a supermarket, cafés and the Movieplex cinema.

→ Nova Ves 17 (no number, centarkaptol.hr)

Karma Record Store

A bright conservatory full of cacti provides a rather welcoming environment in which to browse one of Zagreb's biggest and best-arranged collections of collectable vinyl, with sections devoted to just about every genre imaginable. Sideboard drawers are packed with 7-inch singles, and there's a growing collection of second-hand films on DVD. Karma also have a huge collection of vintage film posters, and piles of pop-culture magazines.

→ Podgorska 3 (01 3633 685, karmavinil.com)

Kloto

Formerly known as the Kovač second-hand record store, this cute shop tucked away in a city-centre courtyard has been reincarnated as Kloto, the retail outlet of an association of local artists, clothes designers and accessory producers. The accent is on steampunk and Goth lite – and the plethora of bags and brooches adorned with skulls, bats and black cats will appeal to the average high-school witch. The shop is named after Clotho, the youngest of the Three Fates in Greek mythology, and the one responsible for spinning the thread of human life. Kloto also sells advance tickets for several concert events throughout the city, providing another reason to pop in.

→ Masarykova 14 (01 4872 659, udrugakloto.hr)

Kobali

Almost a century old and still in the family, this classic hat shop is a real Zagreb institution. Looking at Kobali's artfully arranged salon display is a bit like leafing through vintage fashion magazines and being taken aback by just how individual, wearable and stylishly retro the millinery still is. Leopard-print caps (800kn) look like something out of a Seventies fashion shoot and will go down a storm at the disco; classic ladies' straw hats (2000kn plus) come in natural colours or in black and can be swoon-inducingly elegant when paired with the right summer outfit. For the guys, a raffish linen

flat cap will set you back 600kn. Note that the address is Ilica 5, but the salon is actually located just round the corner on Margaretska.

→ Ilica 5 (01 481 2867, no webpage)

Ljevak

Located right on the main square, this is the place to come for books on science, economics and politics, including a limited selection in English.

→ Trg bana Josipa Jelačića 17 (01 4812 992, ljevak.hr)

– Love, Ana

Designer Ana Tevsić started her own '– Love, Ana' label, a line of quirky interior furnishings and accessories, in defiance of the current market crisis. This is her own sleek shop/studio; she sells a variety of her own designs, including her

most famous 'Chew On This' wall-hanger, and also stocks products from other promising designers, along with a variety of multilingual magazines. An interesting place to pick up something both useful and original.

→ Dežmanov prolaz 4 (01 5801 675, loveanadesign.com)

Mali plac

Zagreb's pop-up market is an ecological, biological, organic affair that focuses attention on small-scale producers of vegetables, delicatessen products and baked goods. Alongside organic olive oils and rare mountain honeys, you'll find a range of artisan preserves, natural fruit juices, pâtés (both meat and vegetable) and natural soaps and cosmetics. Providing a good opportunity to mingle and

talk with good-food freaks, Mali plac is also a great place to pick up gluten-free bread and diabetic-friendly cakes. Check website for full programme of events.

→ Various city locations (no number, mali-plac.org)

Maria Store

Arguably Croatia's leading luxury boutique, Maria was launched in Dubrovnik in 2007 and opened up in Zagreb in December 2010. On sale are the latest collections by top international names across the whole spectrum of pret-à-porter collections, including Gucci, Stella McCartney and Balenciaga. It's not just a question of fancy frocks: ultra-glamorous (and ultra-expensive) shoes, bags and belts are there to be tried on too.

→ Masarykova 8 (01 4811 011, mariastore.hr)

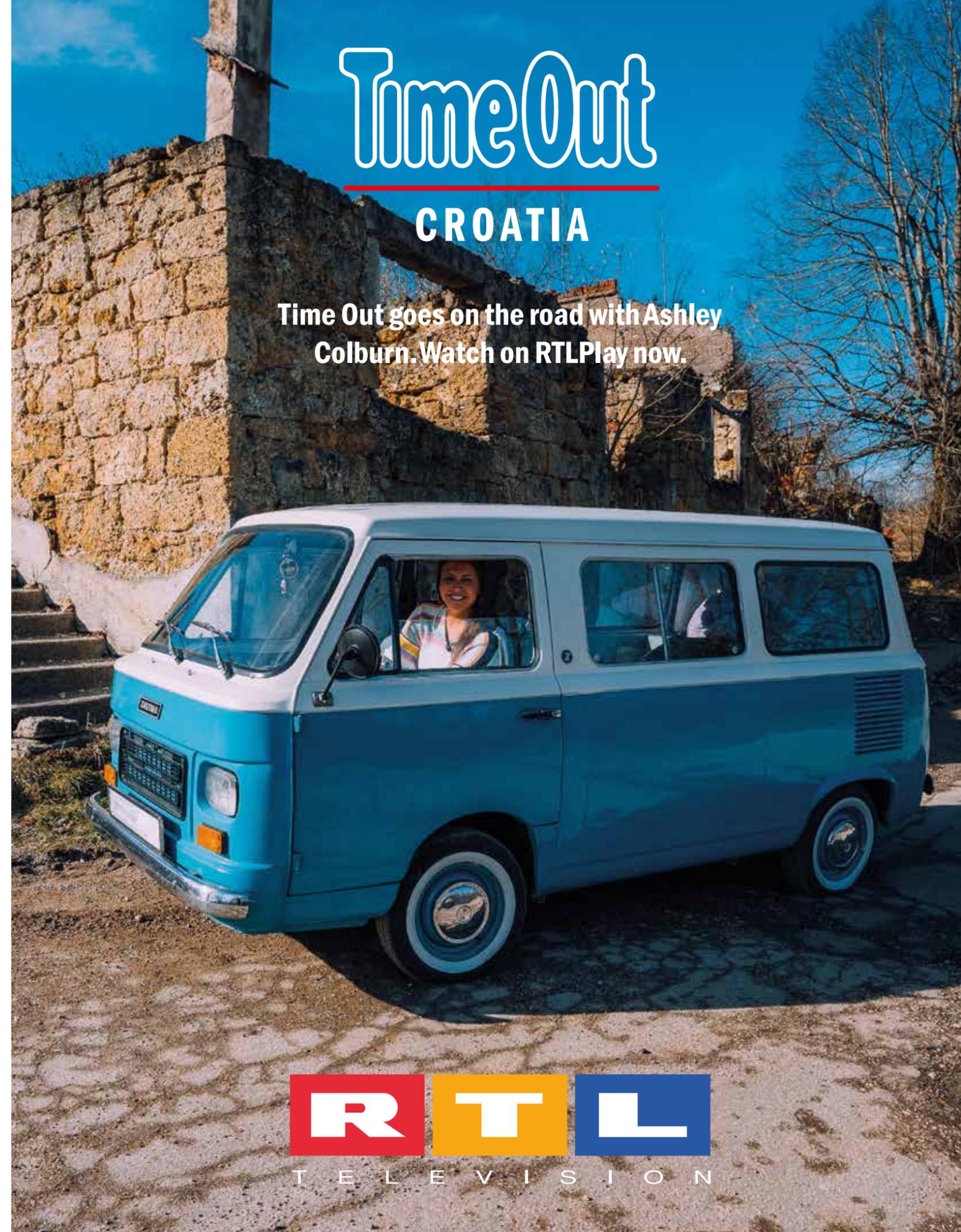


Maria Store

Time Out

CROATIA

Time Out goes on the road with Ashley Colburn. Watch on RTLPlay now.



RTL
TELEVISION

Modus Design Shop

This smart and tasteful shop at the top of Zagreb's main café strip is a good place to browse for chic international design, particularly Alessi kitchenware and litala crockery and glass. They do have a handful of cool Croatian products too, notably the wiry lamp stands and hangers-cum-towel rails produced by local creative collective Grupa; bags made from recycled rubber by Gooma; and Little Horse and Baby Beuys's spindly rabbit-man soft toys.

→ Tkalčićeva 48 (01 4813 470, modusdesignshop.com)

Natura Croatica

Natura Croatica specialises in olive oils, jams, soaps, pâtés, vinegars, fruit brandies, liqueurs, sweets, honeys and truffle-based preserves. This is the most central branch of a mini-chain.

→ Preradovićeva 8 (01 4855 076, naturacroatica.com)

Oblak

Founded by Croatian jewellery designer Diana Zelmanović some two decades ago, Oblak ('Cloud') should be your first stop on the trinkets-and-accessories trail that leads up Radićeva towards the Upper Town. There's a variety of visually appealing items on display, from necklaces of polished stones in various colour combinations, idiosyncratic items such as flowery brooches made from various textiles (70kn-80kn), and floppy felt flowers with dangly stalks that can be thrown round your neck as a shawl (150kn).

→ Online shop (095 858 4306, facebook.com/galerijaoblak)

Record Store

A vinyl shop that looks like a fashion boutique, thanks to the white walls and smart presentation, Record Store looks like the kind of place where you need to try your new record on in a changing room before proceeding to the till. They sell new vinyl as well as old – it's a great place for tracking down the cream of the Croatian and ex-Yugoslav new wave scene, giving you the feeling that staff have rummaged their way across the entire country in order to save you the bother. Prices are on the high side – Record Store also sells new, top-quality turntables to initiate those into the way of the gramophone.

→ Tkalčićeva 34 (01 5520 560, recordstoreday.com)



Saša Šekoranja

Roxy

A shop so small that there's hardly room for more than one customer at a time, Roxy is an essential stop-off for the dedicated vinyl hunter, especially those with a strong interest in ex-Yugoslav rock and pop. The owner is a mine of information and has a lot of stock that isn't on display in the shop itself – give him your wants list and he will see what he can dig out.

→ Savska 34 (no number, cdshop-roxy.com)

Saša Šekoranja

A florist shop nominally, this is a spot where art and flowers intersect. For a tourist's purposes, Saša Šekoranja's shop is the best place to give your hosts a thank-you-gift flower arrangement that shows you both have an insider's knowledge of town and ample amounts of taste. You'll see the sign prominently above the door in the direction of Britanski

trg from the main square. This is Šekoranja's flagship shop. The artist and flower magician also has a gallery, Velvet (at Dežmanova 9 – next to his café of the same name), which sells delicate design elements for the home: china, lamps, sculpture, etchings, and odd-but-welcome findings such as organic bowls made of roots, herbs and leaves.

→ Dežmanova 1 (01 4847 070, instagram.com/sasasekoranja)

Škratić

There's something pleasantly old-fashioned about Škratić, a family hat-maker that has been around for over a hundred years and doesn't look as if it has changed its lines for decades. The ladies' hats seem to have jumped straight from the pages of Vogue circa 1932; although it's the retro styles of the men's hats that represent Škratić's key appeal. A Victorian top hat that's perfect for that steam-punk look will set you back around 800kn, while a black fisherman-style cap of the kind worn by John Lennon in the early Sixties costs a very reasonable 180kn. Trilbies and wide-brimmed fedora-style affairs fill in the middle ground. All hats are made from natural materials such as wool, rabbit fur and felt.

→ Heinzelova 2A (01 4650 289, sesiri-skratic.hr)

Spirit of Music

In business since 2001 under Josip Matić, SoM houses mostly CDs, 7,000 in number, with 1,500 LPs, new and used, from prog rock to psychedelia, blues to new wave. LPs and CDs can be ordered from all over the world, including Japanese rarities.

→ Kanarinska 42 (01 2991 844)

Što Čitaš/Sapunoteka

Hidden away in an off-street courtyard, this is a most unusual and unexpected combination of anarchist bookshop and hand-made soap boutique. Let's begin with the soap, which is made from olive oil and Adriatic herbs by Šibenik-based firm Sapunoteka. It can be bought in big slices priced by weight, or in nicely packaged 100-gram bricks (25kn). There's a big choice – particularly recommended are Three Colours White (3 boje bijelo; with aniseed), Not Everything is as Grey as You Think (Nije sve tako sivo; fennel and lemon), or the excitingly grainy Little Witch (Mala Vještica; poppy seed, clay and lavender). On sale in the anarchist half of the shop are T-shirts with subversive slogans, vinyl 7-inch singles by anarcho-punk bands, and a variety of rabble-rousing books.

→ Gundulićeva 11 (01 4827 250, stocitas.org)

Take Me Home

The aim of this exemplary little shop near the lower station of Zagreb's funicular is to stock all

those quality products made by Croatian designers that also work well as souvenirs – in the sense that they're small enough to fit in your luggage and might also be useful once you actually get them home. There's a lot to choose from here, from Ana Horvat's eccentric-but-loveable animal soft toys to SexyPlexy's wear-with-care coloured-shard necklaces. Playful present ideas include Žvig's one-shot rakija mugs carved from walnut wood (they only stay upright when empty), and Hidden Garden pendants with real herbs inside. For those prepared to splash out on something for the home, Lidia Bosevski's ceramics convey arty elegance; while Filip Gordon Frank's Mini Me desk lamp is already something of a Croatian design icon. In total, more than 60 domestic designers are represented in this one store.

→ Tomićeva 4 (01 7987 632, takemehome.hr)

Ulični ormar

Second-hand clothes shops are ten-a-penny in Zagreb, but few of them really reward a long and dedicated rummage. Except that is for Ulični ormar ('Street Wardrobe'), a vintage clothes boutique whose stock is so well chosen that it has attracted a torrent of adoring prose from the local style magazines and fashion blogs. Located in a courtyard off Jurišićeva, it's nevertheless easy to find, with a slogan-daubed suitcase advertising its presence rather than a straightforward shop sign. Most retro styles are catered for, with ladies' coats, blouses, gloves and bags particularly well represented. Prices are not exactly rock-bottom, but the acquisitive instincts of the ormar team have at least spared you the job of sorting the fashion jewels from the jumble.

→ Jurišićeva 16 (01 4926 500, ulicni-ormar.hr)

Vintage Circus

Vintage Circus is the label of Lidija Bošnjak, a designer who has a reputation for producing ladieswear for ladies who are still girls at heart: bold, brash, playful prints that just about remain on the right side of kitsch. T-shirts (200kn) featuring the TV test card, Frida Kahlo or a range of cat motifs are among the top sellers, although there's a broad range of unabashedly colourful frocks and skirts – one skirt sports a striking map of the world print

(420kn) but they're all pretty far-out. There is also a small range of accessories and jewelry by other local designers.

→ Jurišićeva 10, Vlaška 125 (098 950 8571, vintage-circus.hr)

Vivat Fina Vina

This large and well-stocked wine shop is something of a treasure-trove, stocking all manner of Croatian wines in all geographical areas and price ranges, and a fair spread of foreign wines too. There's a particularly good stock of sparkling wines in all price ranges, and plenty of non-wine extras such as specialist Croatian olive oils by Oleum Viride, cheeky chocolates by Split-based Nadalina, and a variety of fine, herb-based rakijas from the Aura distillery in Istria. Vivat also sells quality glassware, should you be on the lookout for quality home accessories.

→ Various city locations (01 6195 332, vivat-finavina.hr)

Vrutak

Vrutak is something of an oddity in the Zagreb retail scene, selling mainstream supermarket goods alongside the kind of wines and spirits that you would normally only find in specialist shops. Their range of Croatian wines features both the big players and the best of the boutique producers, with a good choice of top-of-the-range tipple, inexpensive table wines, and pretty much everything inbetween. Most varieties of rakija are present here too, as well as a chiller cabinet filled with craft beers. Quality Croatian chocolates, olive oils and cheeses are also on offer; all of which are presented without the snobbery and high prices that you might find in upmarket stores and tourist-trap gift shops.

→ Kaptol 1 (01 2002 528, vrutak.hr)



Što Čitaš/Sapunoteka



HOTELS

Amadria Park Hotel Capital

The 'Capital' in the name of this city-centre newbie refers to its location in Zagreb and its original purpose as the Croatian branch of Austrian bank Wiener Bankverein. A vault and safe still sit in the basement. Viennese architects Ernst Gotthilf and Alexander Neumann designed this art-deco masterpiece in the early 1920s, its classy exterior dominating the junction of Jurišićeva and Palmotićeva. Valet parking is a huge plus, and there's an on-site restaurant, café and gym. Rooms, from 20 square metres and up, continue the art-deco theme but this is very much a modern, urban lodging – and, for Šibenik-based, family-run Amadria Park, a first foothold in the Croatian capital. → Jurišićeva 22 (01 5562 700, amadriapark.com)

Best Western Hotel Astoria

Built in 1932, this hotel is located between the station and the main square. After a floor-to-ceiling makeover, Best Western unveiled it in 2005 as

one of its 45 premier properties. In 2008, it went to four stars. A lobby of wood panelling, plush red armchairs and marble floors leads to red-carpeted hallways lined by replicas of Croatian masterpieces. Rooms range from smallish twins and queens to more spacious executives and suites with window-paned sliding doors. Decor features a palette of beiges, yellows and creams and contemporary paintings. WiFi too. → Petrinjska 71 (01 4808 900, hotelastoria.hr)

Best Western Hotel Stella

The contemporary Stella, which opened in 2007, is another option within easy reach of Zagreb's airport. A comfortable three-star with 43 rooms and one suite, it appears on many generic hotel-booking websites, thus attracting regular international traffic. The exterior looks quite functional and apart from the café on the hotel premises, there are no bars or restaurants within an easy walk. A taxi ride from the airport takes ten minutes and costs about 100kn. → Maslenička 1 (01 5393 600, hotel-stella.hr)

Boutique Hotel No.9

The black exterior of this new hotel at the bus-station end of town

provides little inkling of what it's like on the inside, which is a bit like the hollowed out interior of a giant wedding cake. The reception area and first floor are almost totally white, furniture included, save for the black-and-white photographs in the rooms. The second 'silver' floor has more white, although here the chairs and couches are upholstered in silver-coloured material. The third and final 'gold' floor, done out in black and gold, is the kitschiest of the lot, but is undeniably sexy with it. It's by no means an overpowering place to stay, however, and the excellent buffet provided in the third-floor breakfast room is eloquent proof of Hotel 9's focus on quality comforts. → Držićeva 9 (01 5625 040, hotel9.hr)

Canopy by Hilton Zagreb Centre

Opened close to Zagreb's main train station in 2018, Canopy is Hilton's urban lifestyle brand, initiated in Reykjavik in 2016. The Zagreb branch is one of 20 or so worldwide, putting the Croatian capital on a par with London, São Paulo and major US cities. Taking over a prominent spot once occupied by the Arcotel Allegra, the Canopy offers the signature

features of the brand: free use of bikes, artisanal breakfasts, in-room dressing gowns and socks, and filtered spring water points on most floors. Beds all feature canopies, of course. The ReUnion Restaurant echoes the building's heritage as the former Union chocolate factory, both in name and decor, its kitchen supplied with monkfish, meat and seasonable vegetables from the nearby Dolac market. At the Canopy Central Café & Bar, complimentary snacks and drinks samples are offered from 5pm to 6pm, and feature Croatian cheeses, hams, wines and craft beers from the Garden Brewery. Paid-for platters, ales and aperitifs are otherwise available until 11pm. Other amenities include a 24-hour gym and a rooftop garden terrace. All in all, Canopy is an exciting development in Zagreb's hotel stock – Hilton launches another venture in its mid-priced Garden Inn range on Radnička later in 2019. → Branimirova 29 (01 4559 505, canopy3.hilton.com)

Chillout Hostel

Initially round the corner from Britanski trg, Chillout relocated to

20 YEARS OF EXPERIENCE THE BEST CHOICE FOR YOUR EYES



350.000 PATIENTS

125.000 SURGERIES

45 OPHTHALMOLOGISTS



www.svjetlost.hr/en

Zagreb hotels

Tomiceva, nearer the main square, in early 2013. The recipe is largely the same: a totally renovated apartment building in an off-street courtyard, newly-installed facilities, and neat air-conditioned dorms, ranging in size from three-bed to 12-bed – the smaller ones can be rented as private doubles if space allows. The beds themselves come in the form of brightly-coloured pods. The hostel's key attribute is the common room with Wifi and 24-hour bar – an ideal place to hang out and plot your next foray. There's a fully-equipped kitchen, and breakfast is available for an extra €4.

→ Tomiceva 5A (01 4849 605, chillout-hostel-zagreb.com)

DoubleTree by Hilton

Rising serenely above Radnička cesta, Zagreb's developing commercial and financial district, the sleek bronze block of the DoubleTree was a major hotel opening and brings a new dimension of contemporary design and comfort to Zagreb's upper-bracket accommodation. All rooms feature a svelte mixture of charcoal, chocolate and ochre surfaces and fabrics; big windows provide both plenty of light and a sense of outside bustle. Desks and luggage space are well provided for, even in the smaller 'standard' doubles. Wifi, and media hubs that allow you to play your gadgets through the hotel TVs and speakers, are standard throughout. Importantly, every room has a bathtub. Another major plus is the top-floor gym and spa centre, with a small pool on one level and a large exercise area just above it, big wall-to-ceiling windows offering breathtaking panoramas of the city as you pedal way or pump iron. Down on the ground floor, the hotel bar and the Oxbo restaurant share a relaxing open-plan social space.

→ Vukovarska 269A (01 6001 900, doubletree3.hilton.com)

Esplanade

Since it opened in 1925 to cater to travellers on the Orient Express, the beautiful and opulent Esplanade has accommodated Alfred Hitchcock, Elizabeth Taylor, Queen Elizabeth II, the King of Spain and Louis Armstrong. Fabulous luxury and top-notch service are the name of the game at this art-nouveau gem beside the train station. After a complete



DoubleTree by Hilton

refurbishment, it reopened in 2004. The lobby is a veneered wonder and clocks display the time in six world cities. Stylish guestrooms range in size and configuration, but all come with perks such as heated floors, goose-down bedding, mist-free mirrors and fancy toiletries in the marble bathrooms. The chef at Zinfandel's restaurant conjures up modern Med cuisine and Croatian traditional dishes, while Le Bistro does the best štrukli in town. Relaxation packages are popular: hot-stone and chocolate massages in the treatment and sauna rooms. There are also deluxe room service options like a Bath

Butler, who'll draw the perfect, bubbled tub. Even the pooch gets in on the action here. Pets receive a bone, a welcome letter and a bed when they arrive.

→ Antuna Mihanovića 1 (01 4566 666, esplanade.hr)

Fulir Hostel

Every place has a story. Fulir, on the north-west corner of the main square, once housed the servants of the fellow sitting in bronze and on horseback and gives the square its name: Jelačić. Below the hostel, the famed Croatian leader kept his horses. Today, the alley the hostel occupies (it shares it with a solid

locals' bar called Pinta) still feels as if a group of soldiers might ride up any moment in need of stew and ale. Inside the hostel, there's everything you need and nothing more. It's a small and intimate 16-bed place, with a relaxing common room, fully-equipped kitchen, wireless internet and laundry machines. But it's the owners who make the difference. Davor and Leo have a wealth of local knowledge and will likely go out with your group to make sure you have the best Zagreb experience possible. Logically, Fulir has no curfew.

→ Radićeva 3A (01 4830 882, no webpage)



Esplanade



Sheraton®

ZAGREB HOTEL



A quick and healthy lunch in the centre of Zagreb

THREE-COURSE
LUNCH FROM
16€
PER PERSON

When in Zagreb, visit Café Imperial, a trendy location ideal for light and healthy lunches. Enjoy a quick lunch at a special promotional price; daily three-course lunches with a glass of wine, beer or juice available from 16 Euros per person.

Further information: +385 1 4599 129, gastronomy@sheratonzagreb.com or visit: sheratonzagreb.hr

Zagreb hotels

Garden Hotel

A medium-sized 33-room hotel in a good location midway between the train station and the pretty Republic of Croatia Square, Garden gets its name from the Botanical Gardens a short stroll from the front door. Rooms are soothingly decorated in browns, greys and creams; all come equipped with free Wi-Fi, a flat-screen TV and a desk.

→ Vodnikova 13 (01 4843 720, gardenhotel.hr)

Hostel Bureau

This striking office-block conversion in a former newspaper HQ offers some of the swankiest hostel accommodation in the region. With a high proportion of doubles and triples, solid beds and contemporary decor, it's more like a good, cheap hotel than a shoestring backpacker option. Computers on every floor and witty graphics (rooms are labelled 'secretariat', 'import-export' and other officious-sounding names) play ironic tribute to the building's businesslike past. Rooms on the northern side have great views of Zagreb's twin-pronged cathedral. The large basement includes a café with breakfast options and a snooker table. Triple and quad rooms also available.

→ Vlačka 40 (01 5510 517, hostel-bureau.eu)



Hostel Chic

Hidden away in a courtyard just a hop and a skip from the train station, Chic goes for contemporary design in a big way with lots of white surfaces, pastel colours and clean lines. It's ideal for anyone who wants the full hostelling experience but without the grunge. As usual there is a mixture of dorms and privates, a common-room with kitchenette and free Wi-Fi throughout.

→ Pavla Hatza 10 (01 7793 760, hostel-chic.com)

Hostel Swanky Mint

A courtyard on Zagreb's main shopping street harbours this engaging former dry-cleaning and textile-dyeing factory, still featuring an atmospheric combination of exposed brickwork and industrial floors. There are some cute double dorms, and the communal areas (complete with kitchen facilities, capacious bar, and leafy backyard) come with exactly the right mix of laid-back vibe and social buzz.

→ Ilica 50 (01 4004 248, swanky-hostel.com)

Hostel Temza

A peaceful place that's hardly likely to bring out the hellraiser in you, this small, ship-shape and friendly hostel is in a converted flat at the station end of the Lower Town. It has the feel of a cosy family apartment although the furniture is all new; there is a decent-sized common room, free use of the kitchen, and Wi-Fi throughout. The staff can organise bike rental and laundry for an extra charge.

→ Šenoja 24 (01 4921 216, temza.hr)

Hotel Academia

At the top of bustling Tkalčičeva, the Academia is ideal for a weekend city break. With everything in walking distance, not least the main square, market, and restaurants of Tkalčičeva itself, this four-star comprises 51 attractive doubles, with views of the street or the garden on the other side. Each of the two suites has a jacuzzi. The Bistro St Michael focuses on small-batch Croatian producers, both in terms of produce and wine, while the three conference and meeting rooms, and free parking space for 170 cars, cater to business visitors. Adjacent to the Centar Kaptol mall and cinema, all feels swish and modern, and very much part of Tkalčičeva's transformation from tatty but revered thoroughfare to contemporary urban hub.

→ Tkalčičeva 88 (01 4550 046, hotelacademia.hr)



Wine & dine in the heart of Zagreb

At the Kaptol Restaurant you are invited to wine & dine in a relaxing and elegant setting, while savouring Croatian and international gastronomic specialties prepared by the award-winning Chefs. Kaptol restaurant also opens up to a beautiful summer terrace, ideal for relaxed holiday moments over a glass of wine from our extensive wine list.

Further information:

+385 1 4892 000, westin.zagreb@westinzagreb.com or visit: westinzagreb.hr

THE WESTIN
ZAGREB

Zagreb hotels

Hotel AS

It's a mystery why this hotel, which opened in 1999, gets so readily ignored within Zagreb hotel circles. A four-star set in Zelengaj Park, it has 22 spacious rooms – 19 rooms, two junior suites and a business suite – with overstuffed furniture, two-sink bathrooms, reproductions of Impressionist paintings and views of the leafy park. The sensation here is that you are at a fancy mountainside retreat. The architecture is a wave of green glass that's a cross between feng shui and tree-hugger retro. Also on the property is the longstanding and chi-chi Restaurant AS, renowned for its seafood specialities. To get to the centre of town from the AS, take the ten-minute footpath over the hills and trek through the woods – seriously.

→ Zelengaj 2A (01 4609 111, hotel-as.hr)

Hotel Central

Just opposite the train station, Central is still the most convenient and cheapest of the decent places to stay if you're coming in by rail. The non-descript five-storey building features a poky lobby and 76 smallish but clean rooms with en-suite bathrooms (some with showers, some with tubs) and an abundance of unnecessary furniture. For a quieter night, request one of the courtyard-facing rooms. Or, sacrifice silence for a room with a view of the station. Currently, though, there are fewer rooms available due to a refit.

→ Branimirova 3 (01 4841 122, hotel-central.hr)

Hotel Dubrovnik

Right on the main square, the four-star Dubrovnik is a Zagreb classic. The complex comprises two buildings. The older, a six-storey number from 1929, has a beautifully spruced-up façade; the younger is seven storeys and a 1980s glass extravaganza. Inside the pair, 258 rooms and eight suites come in different shapes and sizes, but all boast unfussy decor with old-world flair, dark wood and modern trimmings such as Wi-Fi and modem connections. Rooms in the new part look onto Gajeva and the café crowd. Rooms in the older section offer fantastic views of the main square.

→ Gajeva 1 (01 4863 555, hotel-dubrovnik.hr)

Hotel International

The 205-room, four-star Hotel International is actually

something like 4.5 stars. The minimalist lobby and café-bar is awash in gleaming polished marble and attractive abstract art. There are gold-leaf chandeliers. The bedrooms are big, wireless and immaculate with sleek, modern, wooden furniture, comfy beds and flat-screen TVs. Just a quick walk east takes you to Lisinski Concert Hall. A ten-minute tram ride on No. 13 takes you to the main square. Dark glass cladding provides the hotel's 1970s-era exterior with a contemporary sheen. A new gym and sauna are a latest addition.

→ Miramarska 24 (01 6108 800, hupzagreb.com)

Hotel Jarun

Jarun is, appropriately, next to Jarun Lake. For visitors looking to be close to the centre (about 4km away) but get a little nature in – rowing on the lake or cycling, rollerblading, and running around it – while also being in the hub of Zagreb's late-night action, you couldn't pick a better locale. Most importantly though, the 30 rooms and one junior suite in this three-star are beautifully designed with dark wood everywhere and more than a touch of modern, glassy minimalism. Opened in October of 2009, the complex has wireless, free parking, a lounge bar and a buffet-style breakfast.

→ Hrgovići 2 (01 3691 111, hotel-jarun.com)

Hotel Laguna

For all its design modesty, this three-star is a handy little option three stops on the No. 9 tram from the station. Rates for compare favourably with those in hostels at the nearby Student Centre or station – and the Laguna has a sauna, one designated for women, a gym and free wireless. 155 rooms and five apartments.

→ Kranjčevićeva 29 (01 3047 000, hotel-laguna.hr)

Hotel Le Premier

Steps away from Trg žrtava fašizma and its Meštrović Pavilion and art gallery, Le Premier occupies a stately property built by noted architect Lav Kalda in 1923. Conversion has been respectful of its heritage, its exterior suitably regal, the extensive use of marble in the public areas exuding style. High ceilings and spacious windows characterise the 62 rooms, while guests can take advantage of the spa and massage treatments, and Stefano Cosattini's seasonal creations in the restaurant.

→ Kralja Držišlava 5 (01 4400 880, lepremier.hr)

Hotel National

For the price and location, a short walk from the bus station and therefore airport transport, the National is a great find. Bright, colourful and contemporary, it comprises 19 guestrooms and one suite, a terrace café out front and private parking (paid-for)

alongside. Reception is 24 hours and breakfast features fresh juices, a nice touch.

→ Supilova 8 (01 7057 570, national.hr)

Hotel Maksimir

This is an inexpensive and convenient modest option five tram stops east of the city centre. Opened in 2008, it has a spotless, no-frills, ski-lodge feel. Everything is tidy – space demands it. There's a snug breakfast room. The 12 bedrooms are smallish with TVs and internet access. Even the exterior gives you the feeling things are in order: sturdy wooden shutters against Austro-Hungarian-esque pastel yellow. With the broad open spaces of Maksimir Park only five minutes' walk to the east, this is great value for the location.

→ Maksimirska 57/1 (01 6666 160, facebook.com/HOTEL-Maksimir-1751067631806196)

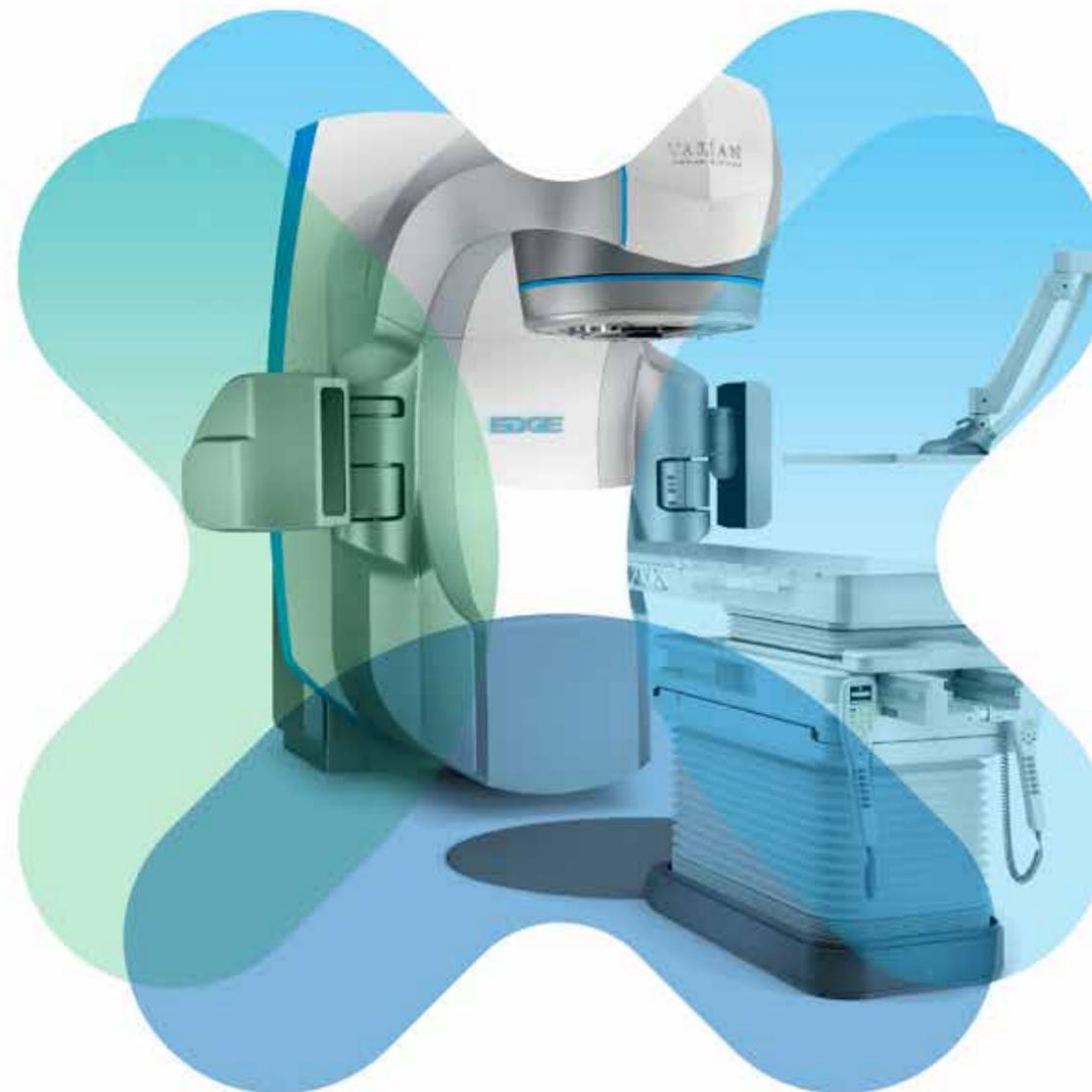
Hotel Meridijan 16

Marvellously placed for nearly any likely point of arrival, the Meridijan 16 is a one-minute walk from the bus station, four quick tram stops from the train station, and close to the main routes for getting in and out of the city by car. Opened in 2005, this four-storey, three-star has 25 small but well appointed rooms with elegant wood furnishings, Internet connections and LCD-screen TVs. There is parking (for a fee) and 24-hour room service. Ask about summer weekend discounts.

→ Vukovarska 241 (01 6065 200, meridijan16.com)



Hotel President Pantovčak



A Ray of Hope.

 **RADIOCHIRURGIA**
Z A G R E B

Screening for early cancer detection and the most advanced radiosurgery treatment options.

+385 01 400 8050 / 01 400 8080 / info@radiochirurgia.hr / www.radiochirurgiazagreb.com



Hotel Palace

Hotel Palace

This grand and recently renovated Secessionist mansion, the Schlessinger Palace, houses Zagreb's first hotel, opened in 1907. More than a century later, it's still one of the city's most elegant properties. All 120 rooms – and three suites – are a mix of Art-Nouveau decor and contemporary amenities: sturdy dark-wood furniture, huge windows, original paintings and spacious bathrooms with tubs. For minimum noise and the best views of Sljeme, book a courtyard-facing room. The ground-floor café is decorated with fantastic Habsburg-era frescoes and serves up excellent cheese štrukli.

→ Trg Josipa Jurja Strossmayera 10 (01 4899 611, palace.hr)

Hotel President Pantovčak

The President, which opened early 2009, is a beautiful boutique hotel built specifically for the community it inhabits – guests of ritzy businessmen and embassies in the vicinity of this posh street that's a ten-minute walk uphill from Britanski trg with its outdoor market and weekend antique

stands. Designed by the owner/architect, who's the son of an art critic, the interior is a combination of old and new. The walls and floors are all teak. The furniture is designer-chic with Persian throw rugs and centuries-old trunks and tables scattered artfully about. The paintings and sculptures come from the owner's collection and are sprinkled throughout the rooms, which are variously equipped with two-person jacuzzi baths, LCD TVs, Wi-Fi, silk-cotton linens and ceiling-to-floor windows looking from the hotel onto the terraces and into the wooded park. Looking from the lobby, across the café, and through wall-sized windows, it feels as if you were in a tree house with a drop-off, infinite view of the forest. The restaurant – with retractable and sliding windows so that the forest-side wall disappears for morning coffee or evening summer breezes – stocks caviar, champagne and fine cheeses. A new Royal Suite with granite flooring, fireplace and terraces completes this fine picture.

→ Pantovčak 52 (01 4881 480, president-zagreb.com)

Hotel Sliško

Sited a short walk from the bus station, the recently renovated and expanded Sliško is a great number to keep on you for travel convenience. Its 49 rooms are simple but quite tidy and tasteful with wooden bed frames and furniture. The reception staff is also quite helpful. For breakfast, there's a nice buffet spread. Prices rise during trade-fair periods.

→ Ivana Bunića Vučića 7 (01 6184 777, slisko.hr)

Old Town Hostel

Located in the heart of the Lower Town, this newly renovated place contains pleasant pastel-coloured dorm rooms and a couple of high-ceilinged private rooms. With a small kitchen, free all-day coffee and obliging staff, it's easy-going and sociable without cultivating a party vibe. The fact that the train and bus stations are within walking distance is a plus.

→ Đorđićeva 24 (01 4816 748, facebook.com/pg/OldTownZagreb)

Orient Express Hotel

Once a dowdy lodging dating back to 1939, the Orient Express was completely overhauled in 2015

and now sports a three-star status. Set almost next to the Lisinski concert hall and walking distance from the train station, it's a tram ride rather than a stroll from the main square but pretty convenient for all that. The 38 rooms are functional rather than stately but with occasional direct online booking deals at €60 – the standard rate is €90 – and breakfast and parking included in the price, guests seem to be pretty satisfied. There's a restaurant, too, and even room service.

→ Trnjanska 11E (091 442 2378, hotelorientexpress.com)

Panorama Zagreb Hotel

The phrase you hear thrown around with regard to this property is 'a good bang for the buck'. The re-named Panorama Zagreb Hotel is located next to the Dom sportova arena on the western edge of the city centre – five stops on the No.9 tram from the train station – and thus a favourite for those travelling to Zagreb for sporting events and various mid-sized-venue concerts. The 279 straightforward and ample-sized rooms are internet-ready and equipped with

everything you would expect: tea- and coffee-maker, safe and satellite TV. The part you might not expect – how helpful and nice the staff are. Sweeping views from the upper storeys live up to the hotel's name.

→ Trg Krešimira Čosića 9 (01 3658 333, hupzagreb.com)

Sheraton Zagreb Hotel

A true five-star on any scale, the Sheraton has 306 rooms, all with marble bathrooms, well lit and expansive living spaces, handsome wooden nightstands and desks, and high-speed internet connections. All in all, like a polished version of home – with turndown service. The lobby flows from the café bar across to the restaurant under cascading glass chandeliers and leather armchairs. There are 17 conferences rooms, a fitness facility, spa and indoor pool. When you factor in the location, service and level of pampering, it really is quite good value for money. Make sure you ask about weekend specials when prices can drop down.

→ Kneza Borne 2 (01 4553 535, hupzagreb.com)

Subspace Hostel

Housed in what used to be an internet cafe, Subspace Hostel simulates the inside of a spacecraft. Guests sleep in their own private capsules, each of which comes with Wi-Fi, android screens and air conditioning. There's no natural lighting because of its subterranean setting, so the sci-fi atmosphere is completed with eerie blue lighting and ultraviolet solar systems.

→ Teslina 12/1 (098 1626 444, subspacehostel.com)

Taban Hostel

Taban is a sprightly hostel opened in 2012, renovated in 2014, and firmly aimed at those who want comfort and cleanliness slap in the middle of Zagreb's principal bar-hopping zone. The hostel itself has a fully-stocked ground-floor bar which is open to all-comers during the day. Accommodation is on the slick side for a backpacking joint, with high-ceilinged six-bed dorms sharing space with spick-and-span singles and doubles, some

with their own bathroom. Breakfast isn't provided, but there are plenty of bakeries and restaurants down the street. Laundry services cost a few kuna extra, and Wi-Fi is free throughout.

→ Tkalčićeva 82 (01 5533 527, tabanzagreb.com)

The Movie Hotel

Open since 2005, the Movie hotel is a rarity in Zagreb: a three-star that's a boutique, is affordable and has a little attitude. The 20 rooms of the complex – and handful of apartments – have Hollywood themes, naturally, with splashy images of stars in all. Sleeping is better when done beneath the stable gaze of Sharon Stone. As well, there are pics of the Governorator, Clooney and Brad Pitt. The rooms are reasonably sized and spotless. It has a similarly named and themed pub in the same building.

→ Savska 141 (01 4400 680, themoviehotel.com)

The Westin Zagreb Hotel

Something of an urban landmark ever since it first opened in the

1970s under the Intercontinental banner, this cool five-star slab has frequently been the top choice for high-end Zagreb visitors: the Stones, Sophia Loren and Nick Cave have all graced its halls. In 2005, a €10-million renovation gave the hotel its contemporary feel and current 378-room, 13 conference-room look. The rooms come equipped with fog-proof mirrors and marble-effect bathrooms. The north-facing units have grand views of the Old Town and Sljeme mountain. The hotel's 'Heavenly Bed' philosophy prioritises a good night's sleep with deluxe mattresses and pillows and high thread counts. The sparkling, jet-set-worthy fitness and beauty centre contains Turkish and Finnish saunas, cutting-edge Nautilus equipment, and massage treatments alongside pedicures, manicures and facials. The 17-metre pool is surrounded by tasteful wooden lounge chairs and black stones, bathed in an ethereal blue light.

→ Izidora Kršnjavog 1 (01 4892 000, hupzagreb.com)



Sheraton Zagreb Hotel



Radiochirurgia Zagreb

Radiochirurgia uses the latest treatments and technologies to give patients the best possible outcome.

RADIOCHIRURGIA ZAGREB is a private clinic that provides cutting edge cancer testing and treatment. The clinic is equipped with the latest equipment for cancer imaging and therapy, together with a state-of-the-art operating room for hybrid surgery. The highly qualified staff have decades of experience in cancer care and will provide a thorough assessment, expert treatment and sensitive support, every step of the way.

Cancer remains a major cause of illness and death, with over 3.7 million new cases in Europe each year. Being investigated or treated for cancer is stressful. For people who are worried about developing cancer, seeking specialist radiosurgical treatment, or looking for a second opinion from a leading oncologist, Radiochirurgia Zagreb can offer high-quality care and a calm, comfortable environment in which to recover.

Expert cancer care in the Croatian capital

Zagreb is a centre of medical excellence with world-class hospitals, research facilities and private clinics. The Croatian capital offers private healthcare services that are modern, competitively priced and staffed by expert professionals with skills that match those in top clinics in Europe and across the world.

The cool, cultural Habsburg capital of Zagreb was chosen by Lonely Planet in 2017 as the best place to visit in Europe. As well as world-leading health care, its cafes, galleries and climate make it an excellent place for relaxation and recovery.

Zagreb's recently expanded airport is connected with major European cities and well served by low-cost airlines. It is only 20 minutes from the city centre, making transfers quick and cheap.

Screening and early cancer detection

Four in ten cancer deaths can be prevented. The best chance of curing the condition is by detecting it early and giving speedy, specialist treatment. Radiochirurgia Zagreb offers screening for many common types of cancers, including lung cancer, breast cancer, prostate cancer and colorectal cancer.

Age, family history, lifestyle and pre-existing conditions can all increase the chance of developing cancer. Radiochirurgia Zagreb offers cancer screening investigations for people worried about their cancer risk. Investigations will be arranged, in-line with official recommendations, after a detailed consultation with the expert team.

The clinic offers the latest screening procedures, including virtual colonoscopy, breast MRI scanning and low-dose CT

scanning (LDCT) for lung cancer, which allows earlier detection of tumours. Radiochirurgia Zagreb also provides whole body screening investigations.

Personalised cancer care

At Radiochirurgia Zagreb every patient receives personalised care. Throughout the therapeutic programme, from the first meeting with the specialist doctor to the day of discharge, the clinic provides an individual approach, expert treatment and a helping hand through the cancer journey.

Professor Dragan Schwarz MD PhD, an experienced surgeon who specialises in abdominal surgery and cancer treatment, is the general manager of Radiochirurgia Zagreb. Professor Schwarz works with a dedicated multidisciplinary team that includes specialist surgeons and physicians, gynaecologists, radio-oncologists, radiologists, physicists and nurses. They work together to ensure that all patients receive quality care, whether they're being screened for cancer or supported through cancer treatment.

Imaging, investigation and diagnosis of cancer

Modern imaging techniques have revolutionised the diagnosis and monitoring of cancer. Radiochirurgia Zagreb has state-of-the-art radiology suites equipped with the latest imaging equipment. Using MRI, CT and ultrasound scanning, often in combination, the clinic's expert radiologists are able to diagnose cancer, locate any tumour spread and accurately stage the disease, so that the very best treatment can be given.

State-of-the-art equipment

The clinic has a specialist Siemens MRI scanner that is specifically set up for oncology investigations. The scans allow cancers to be precisely located and any spread identified.

Radiochirurgia Zagreb's CT scanner provides an ultra-low dosage of radiation and a high level of precision because of its 384 reconstructive layers. For some people, CT scanning can feel uncomfortable or stressful. This device requires less sedation and breath holding, making it more comfortable, especially for people who are obese.

The latest Siemens Acuson is used for ultrasound scanning, generating clear images that help Radiochirurgia Zagreb's experts to diagnose disease with the highest diagnostic confidence.

Expert scan analysis

The clinic's radiologists are experts in the interpretation and analysis of CT, MRI and ultrasound scans. The devices have the latest software, enabling accurate diagnostics. The clinic offers computer-aided analysis to support the consultant's specialist skills and can provide professional analysis of imaging for patients who have had scans performed elsewhere.

The clinic can combine the information

from CT, MRI and ultrasound in advanced diagnostic procedures. This high-tech 'fusion topography' provides 3D images of cancers, so that treatment can be precisely targeted at cancer cells.

Precise tumour biopsies

Radiochirurgia Zagreb's experts use either CT scanning or a combination of MRI and ultrasound to accurately guide biopsies without damaging surrounding tissue. The samples can be precisely taken and examined, under the microscope, by pathology experts in the clinic's dedicated laboratory.

Monitoring the effects of cancer treatment

MRI scanning, at regular intervals, can show how cancer is progressing and demonstrate the effectiveness of treatment. If the cancer is seen to be shrinking, monitoring is reassuring for patient and medical staff. However, regular scanning is also useful when it shows no response; the expert team can respond to the results and modify treatment to improve efficacy.

Radiosurgery

Radiochirurgia Zagreb provides specialist radiotherapy and radiosurgery treatment. The clinic has a high-tech Varian Edge suite in which the clinic's experts perform high-precision radiosurgery for cancers.

Radiosurgery is an innovative, non-invasive alternative to conventional surgery. High-intensity beams are used instead of a scalpel. The beams can be precisely targeted at the cancer, reducing damage to healthy tissue and decreasing the risk of leaving cancer cells behind. Radiosurgery was originally used in the treatment of brain and spinal cancer. However, it is now used to treat tumours across the body, including the prostate, lungs and liver. The technique can be excellent for the treatment

of early cancers, the management of small metastases and for people who are too ill to cope with a big operation.

Radiosurgery requires between one and five therapy sessions, with each taking from between two minutes to an hour or more, depending on the individual, their health and the cancer being treated.

Radiotherapy is a cancer treatment in which X-ray radiation is directed at cancer cells to kill them. As the cells die, the tumour shrinks away or the growth slows or stops. The clinic's specialists precisely locate the cancer using the latest imaging technology, enabling the radiation to be accurately targeted. A customised head mask or body holder may be used to maintain accuracy and reduce complications.

Treatment of advanced cancers

The team at Radiochirurgia Zagreb strive to diagnose cancer at an early stage and treat the disease effectively. However, some cancers can be aggressive or develop silently and spread within the body.

Any cancer diagnosis can be devastating, when the disease has spread it can be difficult to know where to turn. Radiochirurgia Zagreb has extensive experience and expertise in the treatment of advanced and metastatic cancers: Radiosurgery, radiotherapy and chemotherapy can be used, in combination, to ease symptoms and improve survival.

Cancer can affect the whole body. To treat it effectively, many specialists need to collaborate to provide complete care. Radiochirurgia Zagreb's oncologists, surgeons, radiologists and nursing staff work together to provide each patient with cutting edge treatment, holistic support and a stress-free environment in which to recuperate.

→ Radiochirurgia Zagreb, Sveta Nedelja, Dr. Franjo Tudman St. 4 T. +385 1 400 8050. info@radiochirurgia.hr. www.radiochirurgia.hr. Mon-Fri 8:00-20:00



Bjelovar County Top 10

Handsomely historical Bjelovar offers a surprisingly diverse

A FORTRESS TOWN under the Habsburgs, Bjelovar lies between Zagreb and Slavonia, a busy city of some 40,000 people. Restaurants, cafés and bars dot the grid-patterned centre, the horizon characterised by the bell towers of two impressive churches, with a theatre and cultural centre on either side of the tree-lined park in the heart of town.

1 Catch live music at O'ka Pub

It could be jazz, it could be blues, it could be looking very much like a Bjelovar version of Elvis – the O'ka Pub is the place to come for live music, usually but not exclusively on a Friday and/or Saturday. It's all very casual, the performer/s will set up at the back and the drinking continues, with a selection of Croatian craft beers available, including Zmaj. There are quiz nights, too, plus

parties and drinks promotions. Handily located right in the centre of town.

→ Frana Supila 5 (098 194 3084, facebook.com/oka.bar.pub)

2 See a dramatic sculpture

A short drive south of Bjelovar at Podgarić, Monument to the Revolution of the People of Moslavina refers to the heroic action by locals here during World War II. Internationally acclaimed sculptor Dušan Džamonja specialised in these kinds of striking memorials, many with links to the conflict he personally experienced as a young boy. Created in 1967, the Moslavina work is set atop a grassy slope, extended wings set dramatically against the sky. As one critic once said: "...he imbued his architectural monuments with the sensation of human presence".

3 Go green at Bistro Franz

Set at the edge of the park in the heart of Bjelovar, Bistro Franz goes to great lengths to provide the food they place in front of you. Fresh vegetables are grown in the bistro's own greenhouse, the wine is cultivated on the hills of Bilogora, the vineyards overseen by the bistro owners. And putting all these elements together also comes with the experience of having run restaurants on Pag and in Jabučeti near Bjelovar. The Bjelovarska pizza comes with sausage, smoked cheese, bell peppers and rocket, the No Salad Necessary with courgettes, aubergines and cherry tomatoes, all healthy, all nicely composed. Salads are plentiful, the house one containing leeks, lettuce, almonds, carrots, chives and thyme. Herbs also pep up the pastas and meats, and there are wok dishes, too. Slavonian wines feature prominently but you can also opt for a cheeky cocktail.

→ Trg Eugena Kvaternika 1 (043 244 207, gradski-muzej-bjelovar.hr)

5 Indulge yourself with gooey cake

Spread out in a gleaming display case at the Zagorje café and confectionery are rows of sweet temptation, with chocolate, cream and fruit toppings. Sugared doughnuts too, all kinds of pastries, pancakes and ice cream, each of which can be served on a plate or in a cone or glass bowl, with a fork or spoon, and partaken with coffee at one of the tables here. Dating back 40 years, Zagorje can also make a traditional cake for that special occasion. The shop opens at 8am every day and operates until 10pm, and can get as busy in the morning as it does after work.

→ Ivana Viteza Trnskog 15 (043 244 333, facebook.com/slasticarnazagorje)

4 Take in local art

Partly based on the private collections of Habsburg railwayman Heinrich Kamer and 20th-century entrepreneur Ivan Barešić, the artefacts on display at the Bjelovar City Museum form an eclectic range. The most notable artist featured is locally born Edo Murtić, whose abstract work began to garner international acclaim from the 1950s onwards. His contemporary, sculptor Vojin Bakić, born in Bjelovar, saw many of his public works

6 Sink your teeth into grilled meat

A carnivores' paradise, Vinko Grill serves classic grilled meat favourites in a pleasant little restaurant close to Bjelovar's central park. Čevapi, rissoles, come in small, medium and large portions, with a gourmand version also available. Ajvar tomato-and-pepper condiment is also provided,

of course. Large pljeskavica patties, home-made sausages, skewered kebabs and pork chops also feature on the menu, as well as grilled and fried squid, but that's not really why you're here. The meat is served in tasty flatbread, lepinja, baked on hot stone at high temperatures. Open every day until 11pm, with home delivery, too.

→ Augusta Šenoa 11B (043 242 080, vinkogrill.com)

7 Observe recent history

Bjelovar saw bitter fighting during the Croatian War of Independence in the early 1990s. With contributions from those who were involved at the time, a permanent exhibition has been set up to illustrate the conflict. It comprises three main themed sections, one showing the uniforms and insignia worn by Croatian armed forces, another the equipment that saw use at the time while a third displays the operational activities around Bjelovar and other battlefields in

Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina. While most of the documentation is in Croatian, the exhibits, and the dates they relate to, bring home just how recent these events were. Open on Tuesday and Thursday evenings, or phone ahead to arrange a visit.

→ Trg Stjepana Radića 2 (097 777 2466, dohvt-muzejdomovinskograta.hr)

8 Tuck into fine fish at Feral

There's something very classy about Konoba Feral, and it's not just the smart but homely decor. The seafood here is superbly prepared and presented, the John Dory and grouper fish fresh and ordered in specially, the sea bass and pike perch also tasty. If meat is more your thing, let them know your order the day before and you can tuck into lamb or suckling pig on the spit, or veal or lamb ispod peke, slow-cooked under a so-called bell, a metal dome surrounded by hot coals. In business for 20 years,

Feral has long been one of the top gastronomic choices in town. → Šetalište Dr Ivše Lebovića 9B (043 241 504, feral-bjelovar.com)

9 Admire a Baroque cathedral

A parish church until Pope Benedict XVI declared it a cathedral in 2009, St Teresa of Ávila was built in the typical Baroque style of the day, between 1765 and 1772. Its name was taken from the patron saint of Habsburg empress Maria Theresa, responsible for the construction of most of Bjelovar a decade earlier. The Bishop of Zagreb then came to dedicate the church in 1775. A century or so later, the same earthquake that destroyed much of the capital also rocked Bjelovar and the same architect who rebuilt Zagreb Cathedral completely restored St Teresa of Ávila in the late 1880s and early 1890s. Another century later, and a grenade hit the church during the Croatian War of Independence

and killed three worshippers – a memorial plaque honours their memory. Set in front of pretty green parkland, in stark white and pastel yellow colours, the cathedral is one of Bjelovar's major landmarks.

→ Trg Eugena Kvaternika 5 (043 638 639, zupa-sta.hr)

10 Slice into top-quality pizza

In place for more than 50 years, the Pizzeria Bjelovar is the classic spot in town for pizza. Keeping its own recipe for the house Bjelovar pizza a secret, this sturdy, traditional restaurant offers a Five Cheese variety as well as the favourite Four Cheese one, as well as sausage, prosciutto and mushroom types. Most come in small, large and jumbo size for sharing. There are pastas, risottos, squid and grilled meats, too, and a 40-kuna gablec lunch offered until 3pm, either grilled chicken or sundry schnitzels. Opens every day except Sundays.

→ Augusta Šenoa 19 (043 242 186, pizzeria-bjelovar.hr)



Saint George statue



Bjelovar park



Catholic church

GETTING THERE & AROUND

The easiest way is to reach Croatia is to fly. Direct flight times from the UK are under three hours. As well as the two national carriers, British Airways and Croatia Airlines, low-cost companies easyJet, Flybe, jet2, Ryanair and Wizz Air fly directly from the UK.

Alternative methods are by bus, rail or ferry from central Europe or Italy. However, unless you are touring Europe, these can be lengthy options.

Once in Croatia, transport consists of Jadrolinija ferries running down to coast or hopping to islands near the main ports of Rijeka, Zadar, Split and Dubrovnik; a cheap, extensive bus network; and a minimal rail network. Croatia Airlines keep back a number of cheap seats on their internal flights.

By air

The main international airports for arrivals from the UK are Dubrovnik; Pula; Rijeka; Split; Zadar and Zagreb. Brač is used for domestic internal and budget central European services. All but Pula have easy and cheap transfers into town. The following services are direct:

British Airways

UK office (inland only)
www.britishairways.com.
Flies from London Gatwick to Dubrovnik and London Heathrow to Zagreb.

Croatia Airlines

www.croatiaairlines.hr
Flies from London Heathrow to Zagreb.

easyJet

www.easyjet.com
Flies from Bristol to Split; Edinburgh to Dubrovnik; Glasgow to Split, London Gatwick to Dubrovnik, Split and Zagreb; and London Stansted to Dubrovnik and Split.

Flybe

www.flybe.com
Flies from Birmingham to Dubrovnik.

Jet2

www.jet2.com
Flies from East Midlands, Edinburgh, Leeds-Bradford, Manchester and Newcastle to Pula; Leeds-Bradford and Manchester to Split; and Belfast, East Midlands,

Edinburgh, Leeds-Bradford, Manchester and Newcastle to Dubrovnik.

Ryanair

www.ryanair.com
Flies from London Stansted to Osijek, Pula, Rijeka and Zadar; and Manchester to Zadar.

Wizz Air

www.wizzair.com
Flies from London Luton to Split.

By boat

Croatia is accessible from Italy by sea. There are a number of routes, the main ones being from Ancona, Pescara and Bari to Split, Hvar and Dubrovnik. The main company linking with Italy is the fast-ferry Venezia Lines (www.venezialines.com), connecting Venice with regular seasonal services for Lošinj, Pula, Rovinj, Poreč and Umag. Other Adriatic firms operating routes to and from Croatia include Split Tours (www.splittours.hr) and Italian companies such as Sanmar (www.sanmar.it).

Croatia's main passenger line is Jadrolinija (www.jadrolinija.hr), linking the mainland ports of Rijeka, Zadar, Split and Dubrovnik to nearby islands. They also run a daily coastal service.

By rail

Croatia has train connections with Austria, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovenia and Switzerland. The domestic rail network is not very developed, so while Zagreb, Rijeka and Split are linked by train, Dubrovnik isn't.

On the routes it does run, the train service is reasonably efficient and competitively priced. A first-class ticket on the InterCity service from Zagreb to Split costs around 250kn, second-class 165kn, with three trains a day. Some routes don't run on Sundays and public holidays.

Information on rail links between Croatia and other countries, as well as on internal routes, can be found from Croatian Railways (www.hznet.hr). For details of international services, refer to www.deutschebahn.de.

If you intend visiting Croatia on an Inter-rail pass, you'll need to buy a pass that includes Zone D. For details see www.raileurope.co.uk. Getting to Croatia from London involves three or four changes. To make bookings you will need to call Rail Europe on 08448 484 064 as you can't currently book this route on the internet.

By road

Croatia's road system is improving dramatically, with many major motorway constructions underway or recently completed. The most notable is the motorway between Zagreb and Split currently being expanded to Dubrovnik.

The rules of the road are stringent: seat belts must be used front and rear, and using a mobile while driving is forbidden. No under-12s are allowed in the front seat. You must always drive with your lights on. Croatia also takes a tough approach to drink driving. Blood alcohol content can't exceed .05% and 0% for drivers under 24.

The speed limit is 50km/h (30mph) in built up areas, 80km/h (50mph) outside built up areas, 110km/h (70mph) on major motor routes designed for motor vehicles, and 130km/h (80mph) on motorways. In the event of an accident, you must contact the police on 192.

English-language traffic reports are given on radio HR2 throughout the day. Updates are also posted on the website of the Croatian Automobile Club (www.hak.hr), or call for information.

Bringing your own car

To enter Croatia by car you need a valid driving licence with a photograph, vehicle registration documents and insurance documents (including a Green Card).

Car hire

Car hire in Croatia is expensive – as much as 500kn a day for an average family car. Get some quotes online to avoid any nasty surprises when you arrive. Drivers must be over 21 and have their licence for at least one year. These hire companies operate in Croatia: Avis (www.avis.com.hr) Budget (www.budget.co.uk) Hertz (www.hertz.hr) Sixt Croatia office (www.sixt.com) Thrifty Car Rental (www.thrifty.com.hr)

Petrol stations

Petrol stations are open 7am-7pm, or 10pm in the summer. Some stations in the cities and on international routes are open 24hrs. Stations sell Super 95, Eurosuper 95, Super 98, Super Plus 98, Diesel and Euro Diesel. Gas is available in major towns.

By bus

Croatia is part of the Eurolines network but journey times can be immense; London to Croatia for example takes more than 36 hours. Coaches depart London's Victoria station for destinations including Zagreb, Split and Dubrovnik. For more details contact Euroline's UK partner National Express (www.national-express.com). For travel from elsewhere in Europe visit www.eurolines.com.

Within Croatia, several private companies run frequently between the main towns. The leading one is AutoTrans, www.autotrans.hr.

Taxis

Taxis can be found in all towns and resorts. They are not cheap but can be a lifeline if you've missed the last bus on an island. A tip is expected – round up the fare as you would do anywhere else. In rural areas especially, your taxi driver may not wear his seat belt. You should buckle up all the same. In cities you can usually find a taxi at the bus or train station. The rates should be clearly indicated and ask your driver to switch on his meter before you set off.

By bicycle

Cycling is getting bigger but the main roads are not particularly cycle friendly. Cycling for tourists is growing, as is mountain biking – especially on the islands. Information on bike tracks and mountain biking in central Dalmatia can be found at www.dalmatia.hr. Try also www.findcroatia.com for a list of links for agencies and websites with more useful cycling information.

Walking

Large parts of Croatia are best experienced on foot, whether it's the national parks or the old towns like Dubrovnik. Cicerone (www.cicerone.co.uk) publish Walking In Croatia, while another UK publisher, Sunflower books (www.sunflowerbooks.co.uk), issues the hiking guide Landscapes of Croatia.

FIND MORE ONLINE

TIMEOUT.COM/
CROATIA

RESOURCES

Dentists & doctors

Pharmacists can help with minor complaints but for proper medical care, go to the local hospital or emergency unit where a duty doctor can look at you. Details of general hospitals in the main towns are given in their sections in this guide.

Disabled travellers

Croatia is not as enlightened as others in providing facilities for the disabled. Prior to travel make enquiries with your hotel as to whether it has disabled access and facilities – some do, but not all. Savez organizacija invalida Hrvatske Savska 3, Zagreb (www.soih.hr). The association of organisations of disabled people of Croatia.

Drugs

Penalties for use, possession and trafficking of drugs are severe. Offenders can expect jail sentences and/or large fines.

Electricity

Croatia uses a 220V, 50Hz voltage and two-pin plugs. Visitors from the UK require an adaptor.

Embassies & consulates

Australian Embassy
Centar Kaptol, Nova Ves 11, Zagreb (www.croatia.embassy.gov.au).
British Embassy
Ivana Lučića 4, Zagreb (www.british-embassy.net/croatia-zagreb.html). Consulates: Vukovarska 22/1, Dubrovnik; Obala Hrvatskog Narodnog Preporoda 10/III, Split.
Canadian Embassy
Prilaz Gjüre Deželića 4, Zagreb
Irish Honorary Consul
Miramarska 23, Zagreb (irish.consulate.zg@inet.hr).
New Zealand Consulate
Vlaška ulica 50A, Zagreb.
US Embassy
Ulica Thomas Jeffersona 2, Zagreb (http://zagreb.usembassy.gov).

Gay & lesbian

The group Queer Zagreb (www.queerzagreb.org) organises a festival of gay art in Zagreb in April, and regular screenings of gay films at the Tuškanac cinema (Tuškanac 1).

Health

Croatia has a reciprocal agreement with the UK that means – in

theory – British passport holders are entitled to free hospital treatment in Croatia. Even so, we recommend investing in travel insurance because public facilities are not always available and, particularly in the case of an emergency, you may need to go private. The standard of medical care in Croatia is generally good.

Insurance

Travellers should take out comprehensive travel insurance, especially if you are going to indulge in any risky sports – climbing, skiing, mountain biking – although be sure to check the small print first to see if such activities are covered by your policy.

Landmines

Landmines are a problem in the countryside. Look out for signs bearing a skull and crossbones and stay well clear. However, not all minefields are marked and it is definitely not advisable to wander around any abandoned villages or wander across any uncultivated fields. In war-affected areas such as eastern and western Slavonia, the area between Karlovac and Split, and around Zadar, do not stray from main roads or clearly marked footpaths.

Money

The Croatian kuna (kn) is divided into 100 lipa. Coins are issued in denominations of 1, 2, 5, 10, 20 and 50 lipa and 1, 2 and 5kn. Notes come in denominations of 10, 20, 50, 100, 200, 500 and 1,000kn. Euros are accepted in the posher hotels and some restaurants but the currency in everyday use is the kuna.

Opening times

Public sector offices and most businesses usually work from 8am to 4pm Monday to Friday. Post offices are open from 7am to 7pm, and generally close at weekends. Shops open from 8am to 8pm weekdays and until 2 or 3pm on Saturdays; in summer some stay open longer.

Pharmacies

Pharmacies are usually open from 8am to 7pm weekdays, and until 2pm on Saturdays. In larger towns some are open 24hrs. Prescriptions need to be paid for.

Telephones

The dialling code for Croatia is +385. Croatian town and city codes have a zero in front of them that must left off when making phone calls from overseas. When calling overseas from Croatia, the prefix 00 is the international access code.

Tourist information

All cities, towns and even a number of villages have tourist information offices. Levels and quality of service are very variable. There's also an additional call service called Croatian Angels (+385 62 999 999) that offers tourist information in English. The website www.croatia.hr is reasonably comprehensive. Croatian National Tourist Office (UK) The Lanchesters, 162-164 Fulham Palace Road, London W6 9ER. Croatian National Tourist Office (USA & Canada) PO Box 2651, NY 10118 New York.

Visas

Visitors from the European Union, Canada, USA, Australia and New Zealand do not need a visa if they are staying in Croatia for less than 90 days. For longer stays, you have to contact your nearest Croatian embassy.

Websites

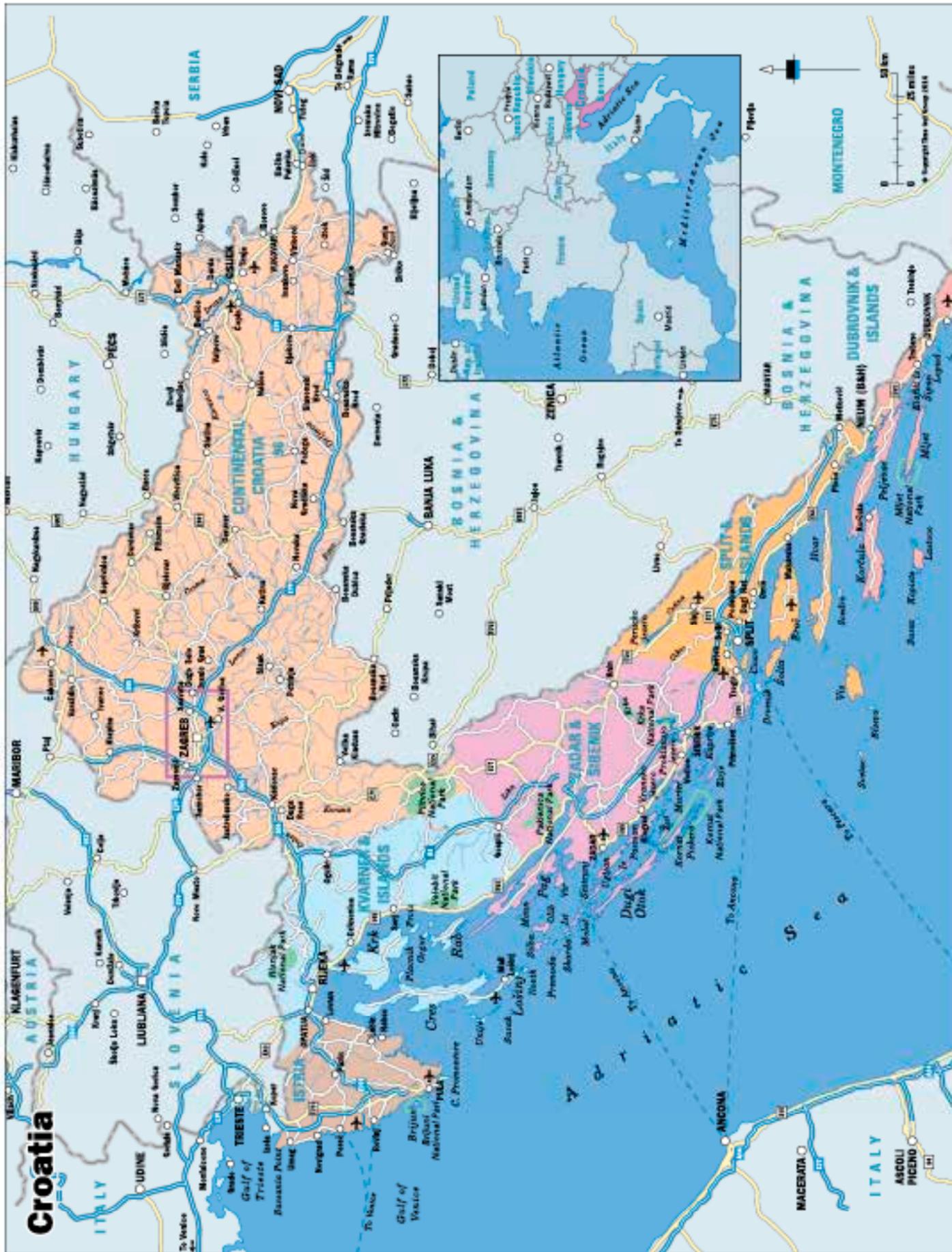
www.croatia.hr Official tourist website – good hotel database.
www.croatiabusinessreport.com English-language site devoted to Croatia's economic and business affairs.
www.croatiafocus.com Pro-Croatia political articles in English.
www.dalmatia-cen.com Dalmatia Regional Tourist Board.
www.hic.hr Croatian news in English.
www.hina.hr Croatian state news agency, English items.
www.istra.hr Istrian Regional Tourist Board.
www.kvarner.hr Kvarner Regional Tourist Board.
www.timeout.com Regularly updated travel guides on leading Croatian destinations.
www.titoville.com Cult site on the old leader.
www.visit-croatia.co.uk Large website devoted to Croatian tourism.
www.zadar.hr Zadar Regional Tourist Board.
www.zagreb.hr The Zagreb municipal site.

VOCABULARY

Yes/No *da/ne*
Hello/good day *dobar dan*
Goodbye *dovidenja*
Hello! (familiar) *bok!*
Good morning *dobro jutro*
Good evening *dobra večer*
Good night *laku noć*
Please *molim*
Great/OK *dobro*
Thank you (very much) *hvala (lijepo)*
I don't know *Neznam*
Do you speak English? *Govorite li engleski?*
Sorry, I don't speak Croatian *oprostite, ne govorim hrvatski*
I don't understand *Ne razumijem*
What's your name? (fam/pol) *Kako se zoveš/zovete?*
My name is... *Zovem se...*
Excuse me/sorry *Oprostite*
Where are you from? (fam/pol) *Odakle si/ste?*
When? *kada?*
How much is it? *Koliko košta?*
Large *veliko*
Small *malo*
More *više*
Less *manje*
Expensive *skupo*
Cheap *jeftino*
Hot (food, drink) *toplo*
Cold *hladno*
With/without *sa/bez*
Open *otvoreno*
Closed *zatvoreno*
Can I book a room? *Mogu li rezervirati sobu?*
Where is? *Gdje je...?*
Where to? *Kamo?*
Here *ovdje*
There *tamo*
Left *lijevo*
Right *desno*
Straight on *ravno*
Backwards *natrag*
A ticket to... *Jednu kartuza...*
Single *u jednom pravcu*
Return *povratnu kartu*
When does the next bus/ferry/ train leave for...? *Kada polazi sljedeći autobus/trajekt/vlak za...?*
Arrival *polazak*
Departure *odlazak*
Station *kolodvor*
Airport *zračna luka*
Port luga; ferry terminal *trajektna luka*

Emergency numbers

In a local emergency, call 192 for the police, 193 for the fire brigade and 194 for an ambulance and ask for an English speaker.



NOA N10



8.1



6.18"19.9



DTS



4/64GB



16MP/2x16MP



3.600mAh



ONE STEP CLOSER TO THE STARS

IMAGES UP TO 96 MP | CERAMIC CASING | FACE ID | FACE BEAUTY

www.noa-mobile.eu



Maria



CELINE, BALENCIAGA, LOEWE, GUCCI, VALENTINO, SAINT LAURENT, GIVENCHY, CHLOÉ, STELLA MCCARTNEY
DOLCE & GABBANA, VITA KIN, MONCLER, JOHANNA ORTIZ, FALIERO SARTI, MAISON MICHEL, BORSALINO,
IVI JEWELRY, ASHERALI KNOPFER, DELFINA DELETTREZ, GIANVITO ROSSI, ALEVI, LINDA FARROW LUXE

Maria Zagreb, Masarykova 8, 01-4811011 Maria Dubrovnik, Sv. Dominika bb, 020-321330
www.mariastore.hr info@mariastore.hr [instagram:mariastorehr](https://www.instagram.com/mariastorehr)