

newsletter

08/07



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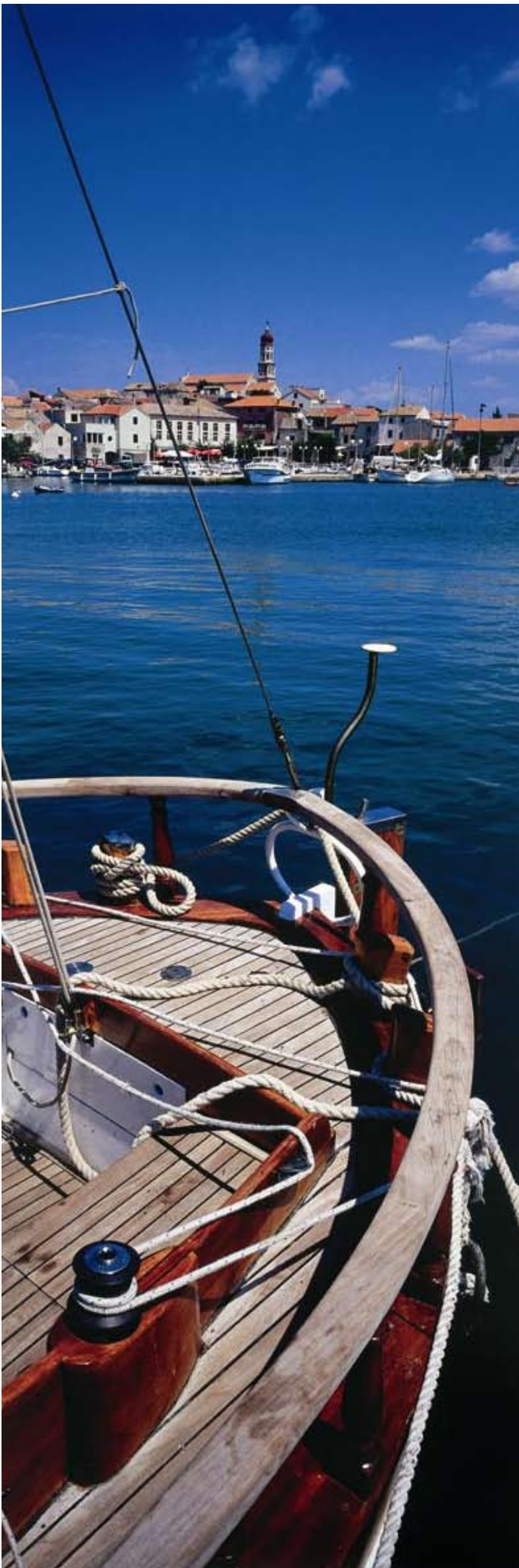
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News

IVANEC

Largest Hippodrome in Croatia Opens

A three-day event and attractive equestrian games in the settlement of Ivanec near the city of Varaždin recently opened the largest privately owned hippodrome in Croatia.

The hippodrome stretches over about 50,000 square metres and is situated at the eastern entrance to Ivanec from the direction of Varaždin.

Besides a 1,300 metre-long horse racing track, all other accompanying facilities have been built at the hippodrome giving Ivanec the preconditions for the long-term development of equestrian sports and tourism.

The tracks, completely outfitted with the necessary infrastructure, can now play host to national and international equestrian derby races, just like to one that opened the hippodrome.

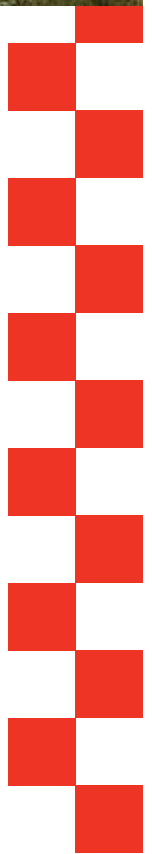
These were, namely the 1st equestrian games, held in mid June, at which riders competed in gallop races featuring Lipizzaner and half-blooded horses, in rides demonstrating skill at handling one-horse and two-horse carriages, and in trotting, attraction races and equestrian baton races.

The race was attended by many viewers, and in the true spirit of the horse races all of the ladies in the VIP seats wore hats.

Besides the track itself, several large stables, boxes and corrals for the smaller stud farm of 12 head that will be housed there have been constructed over some 10,000 square metres. The city of Ivanec area is located between two key European roadways, Zagreb – Varaždin – Budapest and Zagreb – Krapina – Maribor – Graz. These excellent road connections are yet another of the important conditions, not only for the development of equestrian, but also of other forms of tourism. The city and its environs are home to numerous interesting localities, and considering that the area is situated under the Ivanščica massif, the entire region is interesting for various kinds of excursion tourism.

City of Ivanec Tourism Board

› www.ivanec-turizam.hr



MOSLAVINA

New Tourism Brand With EU Support

The Moslavina region is a new tourism brand on the Croatian market. The branding of Moslavina is a part of the 1.6-million-kuna CARDS project "Activating local potentials and resources of Southern Moslavina and the Lonjsko polje Nature Park". The branding project was launched by the city of Kutina and the municipalities of Lipovljani, Popovača and Velika Ladina with the European Union providing assistance with 80% grants through CARDS 2003. Four areas have been selected as part of the region's brand. Cuisine (wine, namely the indigenous type known as škrljet and carp barbecued on a forked branch), cycling with over 250 km of trails, walks in pristine nature and cultural heritage (late baroque period churches and Roman-period excavations).

The project started with quality research - focus groups in which there were pensioners, families with children, youth and tourist professionals from three counties in the region. Most of those surveyed opted for the development of rural, active and cultural tourism. The habits and needs of tourists were subsequently researched. Among the most attractive destinations in Moslavina, in their opinion, were Lonjsko polje, the Moslavačka gora highlands, the churches of Moslavina and the Roman-period excavations.

Kutina Tourist Board

› www.turizam-kutina.hr

CROATIA AIRLINES

Award for the Innovative Use of the Internet Payment System

Croatian air carrier Croatia Airlines, that has earned the esteem of passengers and the business world with the quality of its services, recently added yet another recognition to those it has already won: it received an award at an international airline companies annual conference on electronic commerce for the innovative use of the Internet payment system.

The Croatian air carrier received the award for the integration of the Internet payment process into the already existing Amadeus Internet booking solution.

The award in the category for most innovative use of Internet payment was awarded to Croatia Airlines at the eCommerce annual conference at which 44 airline companies took part recently in Nice.

The development of the eCommerce program at Croatia Airlines was launched in 2005. Internet and telephone reservations pay-



ment systems have been introduced so far via the five top credit cards, a system for the display of prices on the Internet, the Fly-OnLine club, multi-language Internet pages and reservation processes, a Business centre (B2B Internet operations with partners), the Euro-Label certificate and other applications.

The Amadeus e-Travel Internet Booking Engine (a system that allows for the reservation of airline tickets via the Internet) used by Croatia Airlines, is also used by over 80 other airline companies.

Croatia Airlines

› www.croatiaairlines.hr

EBRD | IFC

130 Million Euro Investment Into the Adriatic Luxury Hotels Company

The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) and the International Finance Corporation (IFC), a World Bank investment fund specialized for the private sector, will invest 130 million euros in the hotel group owned by Goran Štok, the GS Hotels & Resort (GSHR), owner of the Adriatic Luxury Hotels (ALH) hotel chain in Croatia.

A contract on this investment was signed recently in London. The total investment of 130 million euros includes loans and investment into the stock capital of the company and will be used in the further development of the hotels owned by GSHR, and the hotels operated by the group.

EBRD vice president Varel Freeman said at the occasion that the tourism sector in south eastern Europe, and especially in Croatia, was of key strategic importance and that the investment in the GSHR group, with proven success and dedication to developing its operations, represents an excellent support to tourism in the wider region.

Dimitris Tsitsiragos, the director of the IFC department for global products and services said that the IFC wants with this investment to support the development of the group through the expansion of operations in Croatia and in the southern European region.

GS Hotels & Resorts, within the framework of the Adriatic Luxury Hotels chain owns five hotels in Croatia – the Excelsior, the Dubrovnik Palace, the Kompas and the Bellevue in Dubrovnik and the Grand Hotel Bonavia in Rijeka. In the ownership of the same group is the Wren Hotel in Great Britain.

GS Hotels & Resorts

› www.gshotelsresorts.com



HOTEL THE REGENT ESPLANADE

Top International Quality Recognition

The Regent Esplanade Zagreb – one of the symbols of the hotel tradition and quality of the Croatian capital – recently received two valuable recognitions for quality: the Superbrands status and logo and the International 5 Star Diamond Award.

The Superbrands status – whereby the international organization of the same name recognizes brands that achieve a higher quality than its competition – has given the Regent Esplanade the right to use the Superbrands logo in marketing campaigns and promotions.

The other international recognition – the International 5 Star Diamond Award, was awarded to the Esplanade by the members of the American Academy of Hospitality Sciences, part of an exclusive network of professionals in the luxury hospitality industry sector. They base their evaluation of top quality on marks for complete service, offered luxury, the quality of the surroundings, the relationship towards the guest, the culinary experience, cleanliness and the most important criteria – hospitality.

The Esplanade was constructed in 1925 to provide top class accommodations to passengers on the renowned Orient Express running on the Paris-Istanbul line. After a complete reconstruction in 2004 this 209 luxury room and suite hotel has operated as the Regent Esplanade Zagreb.

The Regent Esplanade Zagreb

› www.regenthotels.hr

ZAGREB

A Welcome for Tourists

Zagreb, the Croatian capital is an ever more popular destination for tourists, whose visits are increasing by double-digit percentages from month to month. In the first half of the year the city was visited by over 260,000 visitors for about 500,000 overnight stays, up in arrivals by 15 percent from the same period last year, and by 14 percent in overnight stays. Along with our traditional guests from Germany and Italy, Zagreb has also become a popular destination for tourists coming from the USA, France, Japan, Russia and Great Britain.

To the sharp rise internationally in interest for trips to cities (city break), Zagreb has answered with an intensive development of its offer adapted to this segment of consumers. Already known for the quality of its hotel offer and hospitality services, the Croatian capital is developing new kinds of welcomes for its guests. The traditional ways of touring the city have seen a new additional of



late as they have in other tourism capitals across the world – the Segway City Tour. With these ever more popular vehicles it is possible to organize sightseeing of the city in three different packages: the Zagreb Welcome Tour which includes a tour of some 20 locations in the wider city core, the Zagreb All Around Tour – a wider sightseeing, and the Zagreb Leisure Tour for those interested in seeing more distant locations by appointment – a tour of Maksimir Park, the Jarun Sports & Recreation centre and the like. These are all, of course, tours with guides and preceded by a short Segway training course.

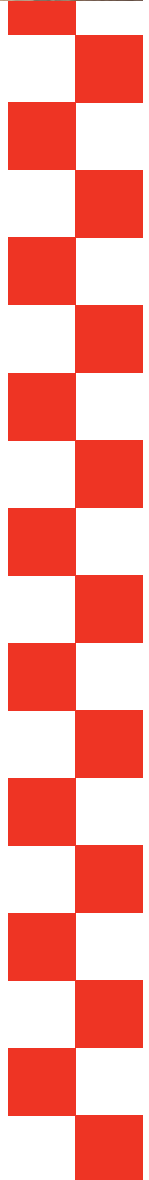
Along with the main tourist information centre on the city's central square (Trg bana Josipa Jelačića), a seasonal information point has been opened (up to the end of September) at the central rail station. Visitors to Zagreb will also meet walking tourist information staff on the city's squares and streets to help them find their way around and other information like on where to get a bite to eat, what to see ... The walking information staff are recognizable by their distinct blue outfit bearing a large letter "I". They speak English, German, Italian, French and Spanish, and also Portuguese, Dutch and even Hebrew. They travel around the city in pairs, moving along four predefined routes in the wider city core and always carry the appropriate promotional materials.

Zagreb is also, for the eighth year running, offering its guests a one-day and three-day Zagreb Card. Purchasing the card provides privileges and savings for various services from 10 do even as high as 50 percent. Besides free use of the municipal public transport, the discounts are also good at almost all of the museums, theatres, concert halls, hotels, restaurants, shops and various services in the city. Also on the list are those offering sports, medicine, vehicle repair services and car rentals. The card, available at over 40 locations in the city and in on-line sales, also provides discounts when paying for various events in the city and may also be used in the wider Zagreb metropolitan area.

In order to provide guests and business partners as much information as possible on its points of interest the City of Zagreb Tourist Board recently – as the first to do so in Croatia – printed a practical Zagreb City Break edition.

Zagreb Tourist Board

- › www.zagreb-touristinfo.hr



High Awareness of Energy Efficiency and the Environment

The Istraturist Umag hotel company is the recipient of the prestigious annual Hrvoje Požar award it received for the implementation of its energy efficiency project. The award is conferred by the Croatian Energy Association and its Hrvoje Požar Foundation, and was this year, on account of exceptionally good energy efficiency programs, also awarded to a hotel company.

Istraturist currently has about 20,000 beds in six hotels, five camps and four apartment resorts, many of which have over the past five years seen a complete overhaul in raising the quality of the offer and facilities. Significant funds have been invested in improving the sustainable development of their buildings, which is especially evident in the example of the Sol Garden Istra hotel resort, renovated over the past year and the chief reason the Hrvoje Požar Award was conferred upon the hotel company.

Thanks to the use of new technologies at Sol Garden Istra there is an almost 35 percent reduction in energy consumption per overnight stay today than the average at a hotel of the same level of quality. Concretely – this is provided for by the use of an integrated system of “intelligent rooms”, an integral system controlling the use of the energy supply and water and a system regulating and optimising heating and cooling in the hotel. It should, however be pointed out that their energy efficiency is not just the result of investment into sophisticated technology, but rather also of the systematic development of human resources management especially considering that the staff are a key factor in the system of reducing the costs of daily hotel consumption.

Of the other Istraturist projects one should certainly single out the new ecological friendly and much more energy efficient laundry facility, the new membrane wastewater purification facility installed at the Park Umag caravan camp and the first Istraturist top-category eco-resort.

With the implementation of the investment projects to date at Istraturist a massive step forward has been made in setting up better solutions for energy consumption and an even better link between high-quality tourism and energy efficiency.

Istraturist Umag

- › www.istraturist.com

Tourist association of the city of Umag

- › www.tz-umag.hr



Points of Interest

ISTRA

Unlocking the Parenzana Code

A new tourism project was recently launched in Istra called Parenzana – Route of Health and Friendship in the frame of which is the Parenzana Code Kit guidebook, which offers an intriguing game for all tourists with wanderlust, a desire to explore and for adventure.

For a start a quick reminder of what the Parenzana is – an old railway track from the early 20th century that linked Trieste, Kopar and Poreč, passing through much of the Istrian interior. The railway has now been completely overgrown, but the route passing through luxuriant wilderness, right next to many Istrian towns and old fortifications will take tourists on an adventurous trip to unusual places that offer a primeval experience of places and people, incomparable to the traditional form of tourist sightseeing of the usual destinations.

The Parenzana Code Kit is an exploratory and enigmatic guide book through which, step by step, parts of the fascinating mosaic of the past and present of Istra and the highlights of the Parenzana are revealed. Concretely, it is a volume of maps with directions on how to orient oneself along the Parenzana and information necessary to break the code. The maps are numbered and the basic assignment is to discover the proper order they are to be read in order to solve the Parenzana Code.

The code covers the area from Buje to Vižinada, and tourists can head out on foot, by bicycle or car to solve the enigmatic code, all with the help of the maps, and depending on the mode of transport one can solve the riddle in a day or more.

Adventure tourists will certainly find this very interesting, and along the 123 kilometre route they can get to know some of the most attractive places in Istra: Buje, Motovun, Grožnjan, Opatlj, Završje and Kostanjice. The project will be further developed and the opening of a small Parenzana Museum in Livade is in the works, as are ethnological workshops and cycling races. A DVD is being produced with 3D effects of the train passing, cycling maps as is other promotional material and the installation of information and road signs.

The Parenzana Project

- › www.parenzana.net

Istria Tourist Board

- › www.istra.hr



ROUGH GUIDES

Three Croatian Tales in a Collector's Issue

One of the world's best-known tourist guides, Rough Guides, has joined the growing number citing Croatia as one of the most attractive tourist destinations. The new collector's edition issued on the 25th anniversary of the guidebook – 25 Best Experiences – contains three articles on Croatia.

In the 25 Best Experiences – Europe there is an article by reporter Jonathan Bousfield entitled Join the Truffle Trails of Buzet - Istra, while the 25 Best Experiences – Eastern Europe includes two of his articles: Explore Diocletian's Palace in Split and A Guide to the Urban Night Life of Zagreb. The Rough Guides guidebook is published by a publishing house of the same name based in London and, as we have learned, the special collector's edition has already been sold out in the UK and North America

Croatian National Tourist Board

- › www.croatia.hr

Rough Guides

- › www.roughguides.com

Presenting

PALACE WITH A VIEW

A Tale of Central Croatia

Mystic stories, fairy tale settings, indigenous food and fascinating events that along with thematic happenings offer excellent possibilities to meet with the local inhabitants – this is all just a small part of the interesting story of tourism in continental Croatia – the country's central region presented in the latest image brochure from the Croatian National Tourist Board.

The Palace With a View brochure – featuring an offer based on tradition, natural beauty and new tourism trends – features the tourism value of several of Croatia's continental counties: Bjelovar-Bilogorje County, Karlovac County, Sisak-Moslavina County, Varaždin County, Međimurje County, Krapina-Zagorje County, Koprivnica-Križevci County and Zagreb County and is a synthesis of their rich natural and cultural heritage.

Under the moniker "A Walk Through the Year" – today's reader and tomorrow's guest – will get to know this truly fascinating region in all seasons of the year and also through mythology, customs, beauty and attraction.



Spring, summer, autumn and winter – each season is coloured with “its own colours”, to which is added the specific ways of life, customs and myths – in short, a real wellspring of experiences that are a real draw for tourist visits.

Are you interested in a tale of a miner’s garden, a witch’s dance, the imaginative depiction of Croatian fairy tales, do you want to literally live the ancient stories of Croatian legends or enjoy a wealth of scents and flavours? Do you want to experience the unexplored regions near Zagreb, get to know the wealth of the fertile Moslavina valley, give your eyes a rest in the stunning scenes of green Zgorje, Prigorje and Međimurje, enjoy the baroque image of the city of Varaždin or the mystical legends that still “live” in the environs of Karlovac and Ogulin – all this is but a small part of what Central Croatia offers by way of tourist attractions. The experience would not be complete if the tourist offer did not include the rich offer of wines and cuisine – along with the quality wines of this area there is also ecologically produced health food the flavour of which will – just like this entire region – take you back to a somewhat already forgotten time. The hospitality is, of course, also evident in the wealth of accommodation on offer in hotels and private estates, always in the right measure of professionalism and sincere welcome.

If you want to head out into this, to many tourists still unknown, part of Croatia take some time to read Palace With a View. The 120-page brochure has been printed in 120,000 copies and in eight languages – Croatian, English, German, Italian, French, Hungarian, Slovene and Czech.

Croatian National Tourist Board

› www.croatia.hr

LOOK AROUND

Find Your Favourite Route

Travelling the motorways that connect all of Croatia certainly has its advantages, but the voyage – if you have the time and want to experience some surprises along the way – can be even more pleasant and fascinating. A unique project has been launched with the aim of offering tourists precisely that possibility – Look Around – Find Your Best Route – whose goal is to encourage tourists driving to Croatia to visit the many tourist destinations located along the main and smaller roadways.

The project includes 15 thematic routes along the main roadways throughout the country. Each one of them offers numerous possibilities for tourist sightseeing, visits to points of interest, the culinary offer and much more, with the routes themselves named after the traditional image of the region it runs through. Some of these are: Palace Fairy Route, Croatian Ruler’s Route, Postal Carriage Route, Smallest Cities in the World Route and the like. Each of



them offers a complete thematic experience as each route follows a story that outlines a characteristic tradition, customs and a long history.

As the first step, a road and tourist map have been printed so far with all of the routes marked on them, while promotional material and road signs on the chief traffic routes are in the works. The completion of a tourist guidebook is expected by the end of the year that will, along with the story of the routes themselves, also offer an abundance of other information on accommodation and the many businesses on each of the routes, with the same guidebook available on the Internet. If you are an advocate of the theory that a vacation begins from when you head out on your trip – with Look Around your trip to the Croatian destination of choice will be just that.

Croatian National Tourist Board

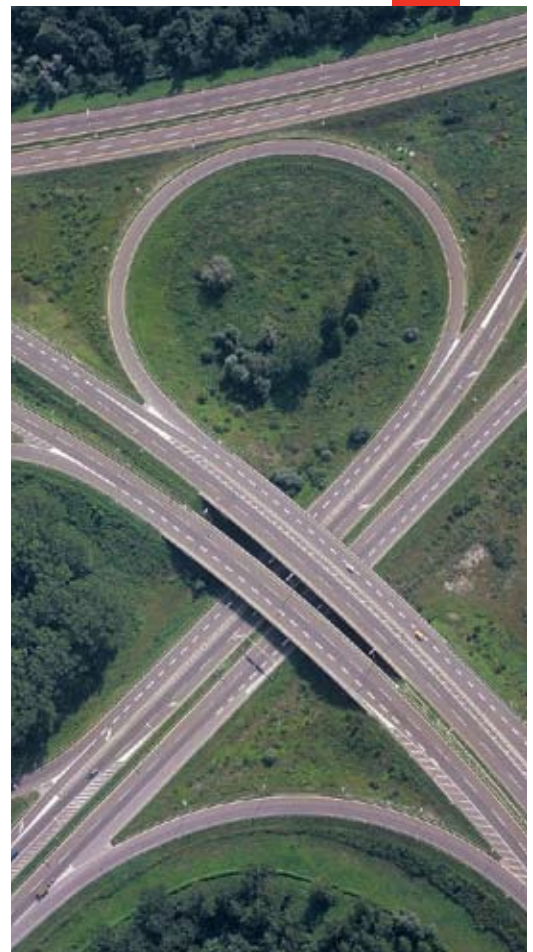
› www.croatia.hr

TRAFFIC INFRASTRUCTURE

Quickly and Safely on Modern Motorways

Croatia is interconnected with modern highways that lead from the borders with all neighbouring countries for a safe and quick journey to all tourist destinations. From the Macelj border crossing at the border with Slovenia the Zagreb – Macelj A2 motorway on the Phyrn corridor towards Western Europe will take you to the capital of Zagreb in just a half hour's drive. The Bregana – Zagreb – Lipovac A3 motorway will take motorists from the border with Slovenia to the Croatian capital in half that time, from where the motorway continues to the Lipovac border crossing with Serbia. Tourists arriving on the Zagreb – Goričan A4 motorway from the border with Hungary will also need only a half hour to Zagreb, while visitors from Central and northern Europe entering at the Rupa border crossing will join the Rupa – Rijeka – Žuta Lokva A7 motorway.

Modern motorways leading to all of the larger cities in Croatia link to all of these roadways located on European traffic corridors. The motorways visitors entered Croatia on via the Bregana, Macelj or Goričan border crossings link to Croatia's busiest motorway – the Zagreb – Split A1 motorway. A new 37-kilometres section from Dugopolje to Šestanovac was opened for traffic in late June on that highway, which continues the construction to the direction of Dubrovnik. By the end of 2008 the 66.5-kilometre Šestanovac – Ravča – Ploče section will be opened for traffic allowing visitors a safe and speedy trip to the southernmost destinations on the Croatian Adriatic seaboard. Besides this roadway linked to the motorways on which visitors come to Croatia via the order crossings with Slovenia and Hungary, there are also interchanges to the Rijeka – Zagreb A6 motorway, the A8 and the A9 "Istrian Ipsilon"



motorway on Croatia's largest peninsula – Istra.

A total of 1150 kilometres of motorways have been constructed in Croatia over the past ten years, which has almost entirely connected the entire country with modern roadways – the plan foresees a total of 1500 kilometres of new motorways. A total of about 70 kilometres of new motorways have been opened this year up to the end of June. By the end of the year the 22-kilometre Đakovo – Sredanci section of the Beli Manastir – Osijek – Bosnia & Herzegovina A5 motorway is to be opened for traffic. It is a part of the 5C European Traffic Corridor that runs from Budapest, via Sarajevo to Ploče. Also scheduled is the opening of the 7.4 kilometre Kikovica – Oštrovica section on the Rijeka – Zagreb A6 motorway. Besides the completion of work on the Šestanovac – Ravča – Ploče section on the Zagreb – Split – Dubrovnik A1 motorway, the planned speed of construction will by the end of 2008 see the opening of the 32-kilometre Sredanci – Osijek section of the already mentioned 5C European corridor to the border with Bosnia & Herzegovina. The opening of the 30-kilometre Jakuševac – Velika Gorica – Lenik section of the Zagreb – Sisak A11 motorway is also slated for 2008 and the opening for traffic of the remaining four sections of full-profile motorway on the Rijeka – Zagreb A6 motorway. This involves the construction of exceedingly demanding sections that include the construction of a large number of tunnels, viaducts and bridges. As many as three tunnels, four underpasses, one viaduct and one bridge are to be built on the 12.4-kilometre section from Oštrovica to Vrata, two tunnels, five underpasses and one viaduct on the 8.9-kilometre section from Vrata to Delnice, including the reconstruction of the existing interchange at Delnice. Two tunnels, two viaducts and three underpasses are to be opened on the 7.9-kilometre section from Delnice to Kupjak and two tunnels, one viaduct and seven underpasses on the 7.6-kilometre section from Kupjak to Vrbovsko, including the reconstruction of the existing interchange at Ravna Gora.



Croatian Motorways

- › www.hac.hr

Events

KASTAV

Artists from Around the World for Guests from 30 Countries

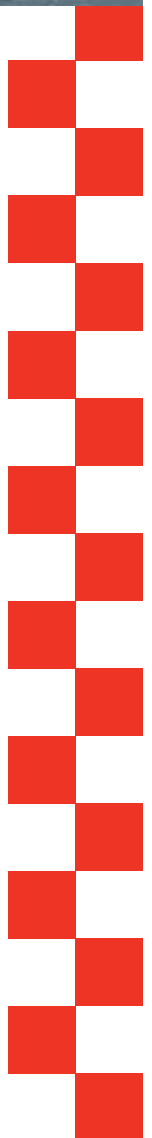
The town of Kastav, known since the 18th century as a city of culture and education - is mentioned more and more from year to year, besides for its beauty, also for its top cultural event - the Kastav Summer of Culture which kicked off at the end of June and runs through to September 7.

This summertime festival of high quality culture programs every year draws a large number of visitors and in this way opens new avenues of development for the town.

The 15th such international event was staged last year. The origins of this, the oldest such event in the Kvarner region, go back to the early 1990s, to 1992 more precisely.

From year to year, the summer event has been growing in terms of content, quantity and quality, and with the participation of many foreign performers the festival has taken on the trappings of an international event. So far many artists from European and overseas countries have taken part. The international character of the festival has certainly been confirmed and in many ways enriched by the addition of a Guitar Festival in 1997. Under the artistic guidance of event leader Darko Konofski, the festival is now recognised in European and global guitar circles, and in the nine years of its existence Kastav has played host to the top guitar names: Renato Rožić, Martin Taylor, Neal Stacey, Michael Koschoreck, Antal Pustzai, Bob Brozman, Alvaro Pierri, Monica Salmaso & Paulo Bellinati, Ratko Zjača Quartet, Duo Kaltchev & Claudia Buder, Augustin de la Fuente & his flamenco band, Leono Moro, Margarita Escarpa, Martin Gjakonovski, Paul Shigihara, Uwe Kopinski, Michael Sagmeister, Aniello Desiderio and many other well-known guitar players. Along with the guitar festival, now known as the Triglav International Guitar Festival, the Čansonfest-Festival of Čakavian dialect chansons has been held as a part of the Kastav Summer of Culture since 2005.

In co-production with the Vienna-based Music&Comedy Company, the Kastav Summer of Culture Association organised in 2006 a Chamber Music&Comedy Festival. Top musicians from European capitals: Aleksey Igudesman, Richard Hyung-ki Yoo, Rebecca Carrington, Thomas Caroll, and Croatian musician Monika Leskovar presented themselves in the first part of the Festival with a repertoire featuring the works of Brahms, Schumann, Schubert and Mozart. The second part of the Festival saw these versatile artists perform classical music in the form of a musical comedy so that Kastav was given a premier showing of a festival that melds classical music and elements of musical comedy. Exhibitions that are held in the premises of the Vincent Gallery, the small Church of the Holy Trinity (Sv. Trojica) and the Loggia further affirm build-



ings that are themselves valuable cultural monuments. Classical music programs are performed at the parish Church of St. Helen (Sv. Jelena Križarica), while the Lokvina and Crekvina squares, former centres of urban life, have become stages for numerous well-known and recognised theatre artists and performers from various genres of popular, ethno and folklore music. In the fifteen years of this summer festival, Kastav has been visited by 120,000 people, while the 4000 performers have come from 30 countries.

Kastav Summer of Culture

- › www.kkl.hr
- › [Integral 2007 Festival Programme](#)

Kastav Tourist Board

- › www.kastav.hr

CHAMBER MUSIC FESTIVAL Rijeka 2007

Tourists who are in Rijeka up to August 23, and are fans of chamber music, will have the opportunity to enjoy the rich program of the 2nd Chamber music festival - Rijeka 2007 that is to be held in two Rijeka churches, the Church of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Uznesenja Blažene Djevice Marije) and the Church of St. Jerome (Jeronim).

The festival started in early July, but it is in August that audiences will be treated to an entire series of renowned musicians from Croatia and abroad.

A total of eight ensembles will perform at the festival - from Italy, Slovakia, the Czech Republic and Croatia, while as many as four of the concerts to be held in Rijeka churches will be performed by artists from Rijeka. Along with the Moyzes Quartet and Nicolo Bulfone out of Udine, the Piccolo coro & Piccola orchestra out of Prague, the Cadenza Quartet from Zagreb, the Collegium musicum fluminense from Rijeka and others, audiences this year will have the opportunity to enjoy a performance by the European Union Baroque Orchestra (EUBO).

Festival Programme

- › [Download](#)

Tourist association of the city of Rijeka

- › www.tz-rijeka.hr



ZAGREB

September Reserved for Theatre

Even though Zagreb has no lack of cultural events even during the summer, the start of autumn marks a kind of new beginning to the cultural life of the city. Zagreb from the start of September becomes the host of now already traditional international cultural events.

The 40th International Festival of Puppet Theatre will be held from August 31 to September 7 and the 5th festival of world theatre - Zagreb 2007 - kicks off in mid September.

The International Festival of Puppet Theatre (PIF) is now an already globally renowned event that, from its very beginnings in 1967 showcases all kinds of puppetry expression. The festival is open to all puppetry techniques, genres and topics. Many puppet plays take place in Zagreb's theatres, streets and squares during the PIF - from the traditional to entirely modern experiments targeted to all age groups. Besides many plays of local and international puppet troupes - this year they will come from Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Italy, The Netherlands, Spain, Hungary, Slovenia, and, of course, from Croatia - this year there will be many other, thematically linked events. The repertoire will feature book promotions, meetings with puppet theatre masters, puppet workshops and the like.

A week after the close of the PIF, on September 15th to be more precise, Zagreb will for the fifth time play host to the World Theatre Festival. The event showcases a selection of the best and most innovative world theatre works. The aim of the festival is to show the Zagreb public the relevant trends in the major theatre centres around the world and to provide the theatre-going public with a window to world-class theatre. From its first season in 2003 the World Theatre Festival has brought the theatre-going public and cultural public of Zagreb the works of the top authors of contemporary world theatre like Robert Lapage, Piotr Fomenko, Luca Bondy, Jozef Nadj, Krystian Luppe, Eugenia Barba, Eimuntas Nekrošius, Reza Gabriaze, Rimas Tuminas, Peter Brook, Jan Fabre, Lev Dodin, Oskar Koršunovas and young authors Pipo Delbono, Antonio Latelle, Thomas Ostermeier, Andrej Žoldak, Alvis Hermanis and Dani Manfredini.

This year too, up to September 23rd, there will be shows by eminent artists such as Russian director Anatoli Vasiljev. The Finnish National Theatre will be in Croatia for the first time with the play Varasto by writer Arto Salminen, and associate of Aki Kaurismaki. Special attention will be directed to German-speaking theatre with the work of director Christoph Marthaler and Frank Castorf and young director Stefan Kaegi.

International Festival of Puppet Theatre

› public.carnet.hr/pif-festival/



World Theatre Festival

- › www.zagrebtheatrefestival.hr
- › pr@zekaem.hr

Croatia in the World

EUROTAP

Europe's Best Tunnel is Croatia's Brinje!

The Croatian tunnel Brinje, located in the A1 Zagreb – Split motorway is the best tunnel in Europe in 2007! This top recognition for the 1540-metre-long twin tunnels was won in a field of 51 other tunnels covered by the EuroTAP project testing which this year pooled 12 national automobile clubs from 11 European countries. The recognition of the Croatian tunnel, opened in 2004, is all the greater because Croatia is the only non-EU member encompassed by the testing.

A total of 51 tunnels were tested across Europe. 18 tunnels received a mark of very good, 11 good and 12 satisfactory, while 10 tunnels did not earn a passing grade.

The Brinje tunnel was opened in 2004, the total value of the investment being 36 million euros. It is equipped with the latest system for the 24-hour control and regulation of traffic, video cameras, a system that automatically detects a stoppage in traffic and the use of lighted road signs to inform drivers. It also has a developed communication system in the event of an accident, an automatic fire detector and fire alarms along the length of the entire tunnel and a number of other solutions and advantages that increase passenger safety and driving pleasure. Croatia has a total of 42 kilometres of tunnels on its motorways of which 11 are over a kilometre in length.

The closest "competitor" to the Brinje tunnel in this test was the German tunnel of Spreebogen opened last year in the Berlin Mitte district.

EuroTAP (European Tunnel Assessment Programme) is one of a total of eight tunnel safety research projects, worth 4.2 million euros and supported by the European Commission with 1.5 million €.

Croatian Motorways

- › www.hac.hr

Croatian Automobile Club

- › www.hak.hr



BIOGRAD AND PRIMOŠTEN

Among the Top 12 in Europe

The city of Biograd in the category of cities and Primošten in the category of settlements – both well-known tourist destinations in Dalmatia - have been nominated among the 12 best in their category for the gold, silver, or bronze, Golden Flower Award Europe 2007. This prestigious award is conferred by the Brussels-based European Association for Flowers and Landscapes. The success of the two Croatian destinations is all the greater if one takes into consideration that as many as 27,000 European cities were in the running, 5,600 of which made the final selection.

The commission responsible for the award conferred by this European association was in Biograd and Primošten recently. After a thorough inspection of the two destinations, the twelve members of this multidisciplinary team expressed their happiness with what they had seen and had numerous compliments for the two nominated Croatian tourist destinations. And while making the 12 best in their categories is in itself an exceptional recognition and certainly another reason for tourists to visit these attractive destinations, the representatives of Biograd and Primošten are optimistic for the outcome of the closing ceremony in September of this year in Great Britain.

The closing ceremony is held in a different country each year and its host from the 17th to 21st of September of 2007 will be Croatia's city of Split.

City of Biograd Tourist Board

› www.tzg-biograd.hr

Primošten Tourist Board

› www.tz-primosten.hr

REST STOPS

Top Marks to Croatian Rest Stops

Two Croatian rest stops - Dobra-zapad and Krka-istok, on the Zagreb-Split motorway recently received a mark of "good" in the frame of the EuroTEST project, which translates on the international scale to a mark of 4 out of 5. In the frame of a project evaluating numerous European roadside rest stops the quality of a total of 65 rest stops was tested in 12 European countries. The best marks went to the German rest stop of Madenbach Ost, and the worst to Italy's Ventimiglia Autoporto, which received positive marks only for service, access and prices.

All of the tests were carried out at the end of March of this year and were carried out by experts at the Swiss Gastro Consulting



Company from Germany's Böblingen. The testing is carried out each year, and this year's results should encourage others to improve the quality of their facilities. Besides, they are also excellent as promoting the country's tourism as the results of tests are published in the national automobile club magazines in these countries whose joint print runs come to 46 million copies.

The rest stop Dobra is situated between Bosiljevo and Ogulin, and as the positive sides of this rest stop cleanliness and good maintenance, a diverse offer of quality food and drink, a toilet for the handicapped, a parking lot for dogs with water dishes, courteous staff and the like were mentioned. Among the negative aspects of this rest stop is the fact that the non-smoking section only covers three tables in the middle of the restaurant, a lack of freshly squeezed juices, Internet access and that only the women's rest room has a table for diaper changes.

The Krka-istok facility belongs to the Croatian Motorways Company and is located between Šibenik and Skradin. Among the good sides of this rest stop are its unusual architecture of natural stone, parking spots for the handicapped and buses, courteous staff, well-maintained restrooms and the like. Among the objections is the lack of Internet access and vegetarian meals ...

In spite of the objections, however, Croatian rest stops on the whole did very well as both nominated facilities received good marks. Countries that did well in this testing were above all Germany, Austria, Switzerland and Slovenia, while, for example, Italy, Denmark and Great Britain, given the large number of nominated rest stops and their final marks - fared much worse.

Croatian Automobile Club

› www.hak.hr

EuroTEST

› www.eurotestmobility.com



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