Season’s treatings
Your essential guide to Zagreb this winter
Renowned for its seaside hotels in the stunning locations of Opatija and Šibenik, Amadria Park more recently opened its first city hotel in the Zagreb city centre: the heritage Amadria Park hotel Capital. It’s location is prime, placing guests in the very heart of the city, only 450 metres from Zagreb’s famous main square, Ban Jelačić. A long-awaited addition to Zagreb’s hotel scene, the elegant and luxurious art deco and secessionist-era architecture and interior accents have been retained and spruced up to feature in the hotel’s overall design.

The glamorous art deco styling permeates through the entire entrance and ground floor space, from the hotel reception, to the Capital Exclusive store with its premium, locally-designed-and-produced products, Caffé Capital with its Zagreb coffee experience accompanied by homemade cakes in grand Viennese tradition to the deluxe, nouveau bar and restaurant. Our Capital Bar offers the Capital Cocktail – hand crafted by our barmen in tribute to the decadent art deco era.

The belle etage second floor of the hotel also pays homage to the times with its ornate decor, with the former bank manager’s and assistant manager’s offices now serving as generous, luxurious suites, sporting original details such as a fireplace, chandeliers and other ornate lighting fixtures. Rooms provide wonderful cityscape views over Zagreb for an authentic Zagreb city experience. Meanwhile, on the lower ground floor, guests can take a workout with the Life Fitness compatible gym facilitated through the LFConnect™ app.

Built in 1923 as a branch of Austrian Wiener Bank-Verein, and later becoming the main office building of Zagrebačka Banka, hotel Capital holds a number of interesting period details. For instance, the conservative former treasury has been converted into the Capital Private Club – a bar available for hire for exclusive and private events. The impressive, original treasury vault doors have been carefully restored and now safeguard a premium selection of wines, sparklings, gins and whiskey.

DISCOVER THE DIFFERENCE

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“The serious stuff is important but it’s also important to have fun”
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BORSALINO, IVI JEWELRY , ASHERALI KNOPFER, DELFINA DELETTREZ, GIANVITO ROSSI, ALEVI, LINDA FARROW LUXE
Hello, Zagreb

Seasons treatments
A Your essential guide to Zagreb this winter

WINTER IS COMING! And it’s a good thing you’re in Zagreb for it. The capital turns Christmas-crazy in December and there’s few places (other than Lapland, maybe) where you’ll find quite as much festive buzz than Zagreb. Decked out in little wooden-roofed stalls and miles of twinkly fairy lights, the sheer scale of the winter extravaganza can be overwhelming, but don’t worry – we’ve sorted out the festive treats from the Christmas turkeys in our Advent guide. Winter is all about staying cosy, so we’ve taken a look at what Zagreb has to offer behind closed doors, from cool bars to artisan shops and century-old patisseries. Need ideas for a rainy day? We’ve got a jam-packed guide of great things to do this season and more events than you can shake a candy cane at. Season’s greetings and Sretan Božić!

THE VIEW FROM YOU
See what people are Instagramming!

Advantages of ZagrebCard:
— Unlimited access to public transportaton
— Free admission to public transportation

It also includes discounts at more than 55 locations such as museums, galleries, restaurants, shops, and others.

From now on, Zagreb Card can be purchased online within Tourist Information Centre on the Zagreb’s main square.
December is the time of joyful Christmas spirit. The beginning of December marks the beginning of that yuletide spirit by the lighting of the first Christmas candle on the Ban Jelačić square. Zagreb’s Advent is a traditional manifestation that offers to the citizens of Zagreb and his numerous visitors a rich program that creates a beautiful holiday atmosphere and brings out the beauty and happiness that is Christmas.

Advent creates a special atmosphere in Zagreb, and during these days you can enjoy traditional foods out in the open, on the town squares, or theme events that throw you back in time.

There is a series of events in December that make our town festive and splendid. Among them are, now already traditional, many places to visit, like the main town square, or Eupack Park (the European square), the Croatian national theater, Zagreb, the Ledeni park, the Ice Park, and the Football. Villa Pekrniš opens its doors once again this year so that citizens can enjoy the beauty of its traditional holiday edition during Advent. Gornji grad will also shine with a special Christmas mood. Please do visit its fairytale locations and enjoy one of the most beautiful views on Advent from the gallery Klovičevi Dvori. The perfect offer of food and drinks will make the experience of Advent on Stross unforgettable. Look for the most romantic holiday atmosphere on the second part of the Strossmayer boardwalk, in Caffe de Matoš, where you can try gourmet desserts of Zagreb’s best caterers and find somewhat different souvenirs to buy as gifts for your loved ones.

Our youngest visitors can enjoy Advent on Maksimir and at the zoo, and sports enthusiasts can join the race “Advent Run Zagreb” that will be held downtown. It is a big international race that runs ten kilometers. More than twenty countries take part in the race and it is used to promote a healthy lifestyle. Every year, our offer is getting richer, which is why we can proudly say that Zagreb can stand side to side with other destinations that offer a rich holiday experience. This is also confirmed the “Best European Advent” title that Zagreb won three times in a row.

The Christmas and New Year events are followed by the 14th female and 11th male Audi FIS Alpine Ski World Cup slalom race, the “Snow Queen Trophy” of 2020. The race that is held in Zagreb’s Sljeme is remembered by the visitors as well organized, with great skiing performances and a unique atmosphere. The race is one of the most viewed of the world. All these events lead to, in the most beautiful way possible, to the Presidency of the Council of Europe that will make Zagreb the second capital of Europe for the first six month of the year 2020. This is a unique opportunity to shine our best lights and show the world one more time that Zagreb is truly a town of million hearts!

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

The Mayor of the city of Zagreb
Milan Bandić
Vid Juračić is the Zagrebian behind the hit YouTube show ‘Kvart Priča’ which takes a look at a different neighbourhood of Zagreb each episode. In every episode, I’m taken around by people who live there. It was successful right from the first episode we did on the Savica neighbourhood, which aired almost a year ago. I knew people would enjoy it, but I didn’t expect it to have the reach it has. We average around 120,000 for each episode, which is a lot for a 20 minute YouTube show.

People are used to seeing images of New York, London and Hong Kong online, but they’re not used to seeing their own neighbourhood. I think they were surprised and pleased. The world is so connected now, people are so connected to their own neighbourhood. They’re very proud of where they live.

As told to Marc Rowlands.

MV THE INSIDE GUIDE

The appealingly nonconformist Tresnjevka has working class roots, charcterful bars and a wealth of vintage shopping destinations

MV KVART PRIČA (Hood Talks) is a show about neighbourhoods in Zagreb. I think the secret to its success has been that I chose not to go around the neighbourhoods alone. In every episode, I’m taken around by people who live there.

It was successful right from the first episode we did on Savica, but I think this format is applicable to any city. I was even thinking about doing a spin-off to cover islands. My plans next year involve taking it outside of Croatia.

I grew up in a house, either here or on the seaside, that I’ve always lived in Salata. I live in the same house my father grew up. Of course I think it’s the best hood. It’s peaceful, beautiful and has open spaces that aren’t crowded like Makarska or Bundek, but it’s still very close to the centre. It will be covered in the penultimate episode of the second series. I’ll do the centre last, I could see myself living in a different hood, maybe Tresnjevka or Miroervo. I like the energy of those places. But, when I make a family I’d like to come back here.

I studied architecture and we learned a lot about Zagreb. I didn’t want to become too successful with the show, but it thinks it suits my temperament right now. Architecture is something I could come back to. I’d like to one day design my own house, either here or on the seaside. I already knew the history of most of the hoods I’ve visited, but what the show has taught me is that there’s a lot of little things provided by locals; the best place to eat or go for a coffee, the best bakery. I was also surprised to learn just how connected people are to their own neighbourhood. They’re very proud of where they live.

Best part of doing the show is the people you meet and the connections you make. We had a party to celebrate the end of the first series, where we invited everyone who’d been in the show and all the viewers. It was so successful, we’re having the second one on December 7 at Bocarski Dom.

A few years ago I used to go clubbing a lot more. These days, I just go to the kind of bars where you buy a drink and stand talking and drinking on the street outside.

We have mount Medvednica right on our doorstep, so many weekends I go hiking there with friends. It’s a tradition.

As told to Marc Rowlands.

MV TRŠNJEVKA

Sightseeing trips in southwestern Zagreb rarely get much further than the Cibona tower, the cylindrical office block that sprouts like a strangely upright Tower of Pisa from the corner of Savski cesta and Kranjčevićeva.

It would be a shame not to carry on towards Tršnjevka, a traditionally working-class district that has been progressively gentrified over recent decades to become one of the city’s most mixed neighbourhoods. With a name that means something like ‘Cherryville’ (trešnja is Croatian for cherry), Tršnjevka is often referred to as ‘Red Tršnjevka’ – a reference both to its suburban fruit-orchard origins and its strong socialist traditions. For a city in the constant times of change, gritty, mixed-up Tršnjevka arguably represents contemporary Zagreb at its most typical.

MV IF YOU ONLY DO ONE THING

Tram Nr. 3, 9 and 12 rattle their way from Cibona along Tršnjevka, which becomes Otalaška into western reaches. It’s an old-school shopping street largely uncolonized by international brands, with traditional haberdashers and ironmongers rubbing shoulders with the kind of small-scale tailoring shops where you can order a made-to-measure evening gown or simply get a suit mended.

Tršnjevka is in particular a favourite haunt of the hunter-gatherer shopper, with a rash of second-hand clothes stores strung out on either side of Zagreb’s most chaotic used record store, Free Bird. If vinyl addicts can’t get the fix they need here, Karma Vinyl is only a ten-minute walk further west.

MV BURGERTIME

The excellent, newly opened vegan burgerbar Fidel Gastro, one of the city’s most salubrious gastronomy destinations, is the perfect place to indulge the second one of the biggest, a high-ceilinged space done out in post-industrial blacks, greys and browns.

MV GUT THE MARKET

Tresnjevka’s outdoor market is one of Zagreb’s largest, its regular fruit, veg and smoked-meat stalls aug- mented by a profusion of plants, seedlings, and gardening supplies.
FREE ZAGREB

Put your money away! Here are best free attractions in Zagreb

Mirogoj cemetery
Escape from the thrum of the city centre and spend a few peaceful hours at Zagreb’s most underrated attraction. Designed by Hermann Bollé, the man behind the reconstruction of Zagreb’s iconic cathedral, Mirogoj cemetery boasts breathtaking architecture, with arcades that stretch out for miles. Coupled with the natural backdrop of the cemetery’s many trees exploding in various shades of brown, orange and gold, there are few more spectacular places to spend an afternoon in autumn.

Whizz down the Carsten Höller at MSU
On the first Wednesday of every month, you can see the MSU’s eclectic international collection, and then take a ride on their signature curly slide— all for freeeee...

Night of the Museums
Embark on a heady educational adventure, as Zagreb’s wealth of amazing museums throw open their doors for one night of learning fun.

DON'T MISS

Looking for things to do all year round? Try timeout.com/zagreb

Human Rights Film Festival
Catch incredible works by filmmakers tackling the most pressing issues of our time, at the 17th edition of this always fascinating festival.

Vrijeme je...
...da i vi saznate kako funkcionišu najzloženiji mehanizmi koje je ljudski rod izumio. Sve tajne visokog urastva, ali i brojni noviteti i zanimljivosti iz svijeta satova i nakita u novom broju našeg časopisa. Uživajte.
Zagreb briefing

LOST IN TRANSLATION

ŠPICA
Špica is not so much an actual destination, although it takes place around Bogovićeva and Trg Petra Prežinovića (often called Cvjetni trg or flower square). Instead, it’s more of a happening. It’s like a coffee break with friends combined with a catwalk. Zagreb residents don’t attend Špica half heartedly because, to them, it’s all about being seen. It’s the perfect place to road test your latest fashion acquisitions, the ones too delicate, expensive or precious to ever wear in a nightclub. The whole set-up is built around being noticed. Whether that is done continuously from the corners of eyes, or whether this display actually holds a greater impact on the self is debatable. But, it could be argued that fashion itself is as much about personal confidence as it is about advertising externally. Just as the extended time spent in Zagreb’s city centre cafes on weekends is not just about coffee.

MOST GOOGLED

Is Zagreb airport big?

THE ANSWER IS YES, it’s airport-sized, which puts it firmly and indisputably in the category of big things. But it’s funny you should ask, because with Croatia’s tourism industry booming, Zagreb’s airport capacity is a hot topic. Passenger figures have almost tripled since the year 2000, with well over three million travellers flying in 2018 - and that looks set to rise. As well as regular flights to major European cities, the airport now connects to destinations as far as Seoul and Toronto, with airlines rushing to get a spot on that sweet, sweet tarmac. In 2017 a shiny new terminal building was opened to meet ever-growing demand. The 65,000 m2 behemoth has that Star Trek look rocked by many of the world’s coolest airports, and it’s so spacious that collecting your luggage is a weirdly zen experience.

Zagreb in focus

THERE’S NO TWO-WAYS about it: bus journeys are boring. But imagine how much more boring they’d be without those funky, colourful patterns that cover the seats. Zagreb-based artist and designer Lucija Gudek has set herself the mighty task of photographing the most striking prints she sees on public transport, collating the pictures on her ongoing Instagram project @prints_in_public_transport. Designs range from illustrative to geometric, with some of them even the kind of Op-Arty patterns that get your eyes all freaked out. Check out Gudek’s pictures here, and spend the rest of your commutes feeling thoroughly inspired.

Check out more Zagreb snaps at timeout.com/croatia/things-to-do/a-view-from-croatia
30 things to do in Zagreb this autumn

We pick the best events and activities to enjoy this season in the Croatian capital

1 Visit the Zagreb Film Festival
Under the motto ‘Hot in November’, the 17th annual Zagreb Film Festival runs over 11 days and at six venues, including the Tuškanac cinema and Museum of Contemporary Art. As always, young talent is brought to the fore, most notably Russian director Kantemir Balagov, whose Beanpole won a prize at Cannes.
ÆÆ Various venues (zff.hr); Nov 7-17

2 Go ice skating
As part of the Advent celebrations, the park on Trg kralja Tomislava outside the Art Pavilion is converted into a huge public ice rink from 30th of November till the beginning of January 2020. Surrounded by stands serving seasonal treats and mulled wine, skaters glide round to lively music. Instructors are on hand for the uninitiated.
ÆÆ Trg kralja Tomislava (adventzagreb.com)

3 Revive yourself with seasonal coffee
Zagreb’s key specialty coffee spots, independent roasters such as Cogito and Quahwa, produce special seasonal drinks once autumn turns chilly. Look out for their winter lattes, available at downtown locations. Quahwa’s Ion Tesla and Cogito’s U DVoritlu.
ÆÆ Ion Tesla, Ion Tesla p. 1 (01 3693 974, quahwa.net); Cogito, U DVoritlu

4 Catch a live act
The cooler months are the time Zagreb’s music scene springs back to life after the summer break. Look out for Icelandic multi-instrumentalist Ólafur Arnalds at Tvornica Kulture on November 21, Macedonian Roma brassband Kočani Orkestar at Boogaloo on January 18 and Hawkwind-inspired heavy rockers Monster Magnet at Močvara on February 15.
ÆÆ Tvornica Kulture, Šubićeva 2 (01 7778 673, tvornicakulture.com); Močvara, Trnjanski nasip (01 615 967, mochvara.hr); Boogaloo, Ulica grada Vukovara 68 (01 631 30 22, facebook.com/boogaloozgb)

5 Go on a truffle hunt
An entertaining half-day in the great outdoors, a truffle hunt is easily organised from Zagreb, the tour company picking you up from your hotel and driving you to woods dotted with the high-quality black variety. Accompanying you will be a couple of Lagotto Romagnolos, child-friendly dogs and expert truffle hunters.
ÆÆ trufflehunting-zagreb.hr

6 Tour Mirogoj cemetery
Some 300,000 souls dwell in the national cemetery, Mirogoj, including the first President of the Republic of Croatia, Dr. Franjo Tuđman, legendary basketball player Dražen Petrović and architect Hermann Bollé, who designed the beautifully ornate main building.
ÆÆ Aleja Hermanna Bolle 27 (01 4696 732, gradskagroblja.hr)

Get more great ideas at timeout.com/zagreb
Learn the ways of the blind
One of the few of its kind in the world, the Typhlological Museum aims to help visitors understand the world of the visually impaired. Displays include the development of Braille but most head straight for the dark room, negotiated by means of all the other senses.

→ Draškovićeva 80 (01 4811 102, tifloloskimuzej.hr)

Chow down on an authentic American burger
Zagreb is full of US-style burger joints: these days sports-friendly Brewbits offers a house variety with crispy bacon as well as the double-burger Jaw Distortion, while Papa’s in Tkalčićeva styles itself as a “True American Bar”. More upscale is the American Brak & Grill House at the Hotel Dubrovnik.

→ Brewbits, Gajeva 10 (01 4820 800, brewbits.hr); Papa’s Restaurant (01 4824 017, papas.hr); American Brak & Grill House, Hotel Dubrovnik, Tkalčićeva 15 (01 4865 3200, hotel-dubrovnik.hr)

Take an urban wine tour
Starting out at Zrinjevac in town, this tour takes in Zagreb’s main wine bars and Croatia’s finest tipples, matched with tasty prosciutto and cheeses. Tours last half a day, enough for your guide to explain about Croatia’s wine industry and terroirs, from Slavonia to Istria to Dalmatia.

→ croatia-excursions.hr

Shop for unusual souvenirs
Stocking storage bags bearing idiosyncratic messages (“Don’t grow up – it’s a trap!”) and Croatia-themed memory games, Take Me Home is full of inventive Christmas presents. Alternatively, head to the gift store at the Museum of Broken Relationships for bad memories erasers and anti-stress pencils.

→ Take Me Home, Tomićeva 4 (01 7987 632, takemehome.hr); Museum of Broken Relationships, Ćirilometodska 2. (01 4851 021, brokenships.com)

Discover Zagreb street art
Brightening up any autumn day, the street art of Zagreb can be found around the city. The wall running along the train tracks on Branimirova, has long been a colourful canvas. Up on Gradec, look out for likenesses of Croatian inventors Tesla and Penkala.

→ Anthony Brooks

Hunt for vinyl
With vinyl making a comeback, Zagreb’s a great place to sniff out rare records – and cheaper than you might find them at home. Head for Karma Vinyl on Podgoračka, Free Bird on Tretinskih and Rony on Savska cesta, as well as the stalls at the Britanski trg street market of a Sunday morning.

→ Karma Vinyl, Podgoračka 31 (01 3633 685, karmavinil.com); Free Bird, Tretinskih 50; (01 3821 870, freebird.hr); Rony, Savska cesta 14 (cypherpromo.com)

Walk through Croatian football history
Close to Zagreb’s main square, ‘Be Proud’ is a multimedia exhibition telling the recent success story of Croatian football. Illustrations, artefacts and a dressing room lined with Croatian shirts complement interactive features such as being able to choose your favourite goal from the extensive database.

→ Petrinjska 2 (hns-cff.hr/hns/multimedijski-centar)

Explore the world of Alexander Calder
With loans from the Tate Modern and the Pompidou, The Magic of a Sculptural Movement is the latest in a series on influential sculptors of the 20th century at the Art Pavilion. Alexander Calder, a friend of Miró and Duchamp, is known for his imaginative mobiles.

→ Grega Bicanic 23 (01 3841 670, unipaviljon.hr); Until Jan 5, 2020

Things to do in autumn
Things to do in autumn

15 See an important film
This free-to-attend film festival showcases campaigning films from politically-committed directors, plus panel discussions and after-show DJs. HRFF gives you a chance to see indie films by up-and-coming directors as well as inspired, world-spanning documentaries before they hit the festival circuit.
→ Various locations. (humanrightsfestival.org) Dec 1-8

16 Visit an unusual museum
Zagreb is dotted with strange museums, from a miniature version of Croatia’s capital at the Zagreb Mini Train Museum to the offbeat retro treasures in the 80’s Museum. Rare fungi await at the Mushroom Museum and random objects left behind when couples split at the Museum of Broken Relationships.
→ Zagreb Mini Train Museum, Gundulićeva 4 (01 4833 226, buude.hr); Zagreb 80’s Museum, Radiljeva 34 (zagreb80.com); Backnoise Museum, Splavnica 2 (01 4819 528, krobi.hr); Museum of Broken Relationships, Chitomateđa 2 (01 4835 022, brokenhips.com)

17 Enjoy a night at the opera
The ornate Croatian National Theatre on Trg Republike Hrvatske not only stages Croatian-language theatre but also opera – such as Puccini’s Madama Butterfly and Mozart’s The Magic Flute, both programmed for the autumn of 2019. Admission is affordable and the Habsburg-era surroundings sumptuous.
→ Croatian National Theatre, Trg Republike Hrvatske 15 (hnk.hr)

18 Sip Zagreb’s finest hot chocolate
A rare case of a Habsburg-era brand so beloved that it survived the Communist era and remains popular today, The Kraš chocolate Choco Bar on Ilica serves several kinds of chocolate cocktails, including the orange-tinged Jaffa and Hot Peppermint. Traditionalists can opt for the Kraš 1911, a nod to the brand’s historic origins.
→ Ilica 15 (01 4876 362, kraschocobar.com)

19 Catch a football match
Runaway domestic champions in 2019 (like most years), Dinamo Zagreb are unsurprisingly Croatia’s most titled football club. They play at the national Maksimir Stadium in the east of town, easily reached by tram. Home supporters gather at the Bad Blue Boys Fan Club on the park side of the ground. This year you can oversee them playing the likes of Manchester City in the Champions League.
→ Maksimir karta 2.0 (maksimir.hr)

20 Go clubbing
As well as one-off nights like the visit of tech-house maestros Poker Flat Records, Spanish to Jucinian Cristian Varela and trance legend Paul Van Dyk, clubbers can look forward this season to an eight-DJ anniversary night for Klubska Scena at Aquarius on November 15 and the Future Sound of Zagreb weekend at Boogaloo on November 22 + 23.
→ Aquarius, Aleja Matije Ljubeka 19 (01 3640 231, facebook.com/aquariusklub); Boogaloo, Ulica grada Vukovara 68 (facebook.com/boogaloozgb).

21 Hike on Medvednica
The slopes of Medvednica outside Zagreb attract hikers every weekend when rustic mountain huts turn into homely eateries. Hearty bowls of bean soup reward ramblers, along with the pasta dish of mlinci, usually served with turkey. Later in the year, the ski centre opens for the winter.
→ sljeme.hr

22 Sup craft beer
Zagreb knows its artisanal ale. The Hop In Craft Beer Bar is one for the aficionados, with eight domestic brews on tap, the Craft Room offers 15 on draught and 200 by the bottle while The Garden Brewery fills an industrial space with a taproom and weekend parties.
→ Hop In Craft Beer Bar, Dubravkin trg 3 (01 6646 322, krobi.hr); Craft Room, Opatovina 35 (01 4845 306, facebook.com/avokadolove); The Garden Brewery, Slavonska avdija 22F (thegarden.hr)
If you are a traveler… Well, of course you are. But if you have “a bee in a bonnet” just say the word and we will take…

You can start your day right by having a sip of specialty coffee or a cup of tea in the morning. Besides that, you can…

Join local shoppers at Zagreb market
Find rows of fresh produce, jams, honeys and rakija brandy at Zagreb’s market, Dolac, behind the main square. In the dairy section indoors, locals swear by the cream cheese that they spread on croissants. Tradition is also embodied by the statue of a typical vendor, Kumica Barica, at the edge of the market.

Relax in Maksimir Park
Zagreb’s largest park is a sprawling expanse of autumnal colour in the east of town. Bishop Maksimilijan Vrhovac created it according to the then fashionable English style, rustic and informal, dotted with oak trees, footpaths and lakes. Here also is Zagreb Zoo, with snow leopards, red pandas, and European bison.

Sink a Rakija or two
A speciality spirits outlet on busy Tkalčićeva, the Rakhia Bar offers more than 100 types of Croatia’s signature drink, rakija. Brandies imbued with any number of flavours – mistletoe, honey, truffle or lavender – are sourced from all over Croatia, Istria, Dalmatia, Slavonia and Herzegovina just over the border.

Browse Croatian bric-à-brac
Every Saturday and Sunday morning, stallholders set up an antiques fair on Britanski trg, a couple of tram stops along Illica from Zagreb’s main square. Random furniture, kitsch ornaments and vintage household goods line the pavement, along with books, paintings, vintage radios and all kinds of fascinating old stuff.

You can try our signature cocktails or our creative bar staff can make you a custom one. But don’t call us after a blurry night out…
27 Bar crawl along Tkalčićeva
Zagreb’s busiest bar strip is Tkalčićeva, a narrow street winding behind the main square. Strolling from a standard local hostelry such as Ožujsko Pub Tkalča to craft-beer specialists Mali Medo, rakija experts Rakhia Bar and the pub-like Oliver Twist takes just over five minutes – and offers variety a-plenty.
Ožujsko Pub Tkalča, Tkalčićeva 16 (01 482 72 23), facebook.com/OzujskoPubTkalca;
Mali Medo, Tkalčićeva 36 (01 492 9 613, pivovara-medvedgrad.hr/mali-medo);
Rakhia Bar, Tkalčićeva 45 (098 96 4 058);
Oliver Twist, Tkalčićeva 60 (01 48 12 206).

28 Hang out at špica
Špica takes place in the hub of cafés between Zagreb’s main square and Trg Petra Preradovića (also known as Cvjetni trg or flower square). špica is a concept, a chance for fashionable locals to chat over coffee after shopping on Saturday morning. With everyone in de rigueur sunglasses, it’s a great chance to observe chic locals interacting.

29 Sample seasonal cuisine
Most of Zagreb’s upscale restaurants – Zinfandel’s at the Esplanade Zagreb Hotel, the Pod Zidom Bistro & Wine Bar by Kaptol and the NAV Restoran near the National Theatre – introduce quality autumnal produce on their menus, most notably truffles, mushrooms and game, not to mention the new wine vintage, also used for sauces.
Zinfandel’s, Esplanade Zagreb Hotel, Mihanovićeva 1 (01 456 6 666, zinfandel.hr);
Pod Zidom Bistro, Pod Zidom 5 (099 325 36 00, facebook.com/PodZidom);
NAV Restoran, Masarykova 11/1 (01 20 29 961, nav-restaurant.com).

30 Spend the day at a spa
When it’s blowy outside, what better idea than to indulge in a little pampering? The Health Club at the Esplanade Zagreb Hotel offers body peeling with Himalayan salt, Mediterranean massages with lavender and olive oil, even massages with bamboo sticks. You can also order a scented bath in your own room.
Health Club, Esplanade Zagreb Hotel, Mihanovićeva 1 (01 456 0 099, healthclub-esplanade.com).

Advent Zagreb
Zagreb behind closed doors

Jonathan Bousfield unlocks some of the city’s hidden charms

ZAGREB IS THE INSIDER’S city that outsiders love to explore. Unlike some capitals, it doesn’t have just two or three iconic sites which daytrippers can manage in a single afternoon. Instead, its true character is revealed in unusual details and intimate charms and best experienced at a more relaxed pace, preferably across a longer duration. In summer, Zagreb is the ideal strollable city, life is lived outdoors, and its secrets are easily discovered. In winter however, society retreats behind its shutters, and the revelry of the advent season excepted, it’s that makes the city tick. The uniqueness of Zagreb is frequently hidden away in snug cafes, smoky bars and artisan shops, few of which advertise their presence to the casual visitor. Hopefully the list that follows will help you unlock the Croatian capital’s warm, welcoming and decidedly eccentric personality.

Rockmark bookshop

“Writing about music is like dancing about architecture”, so goes the oft-quoted remark attributed to American comedian Martin Mull. This has certainly never bothered Rockmark, a boutique bookshop devoted to tomes about music – mostly of the rock and pop variety. It has a wider selection of English-language titles than many other mainland European bookshops (we counted three different histories of Joy Division/New Order/Faculty Records alongside all manner of rock-star biographies, autobiographies and songbooks) and also sells cool T-shirts. Hidden down a flight of steps two blocks away from the main square, it’s definitely in a niche of its own.

Orijent patisserie

The best sweets in Zagreb often come from the kind of places that don’t have a big outdoor terrace and don’t scream “cake!” to casual passers-by. One such place is Orijent, founded in the 1930s and a long-standing cult among discerning locals. Once beyond the unassuming portal you could almost be entering another epoch, with an interior characterized art-deco details and cute wooden stools. Orijent’s own-recipe cakes display a level of originality and imagination that you don’t always find in the city-centre cafes, and the ice cream is worth a special trip.

Sedmica café-bar

Not so long ago there was no sign whatsoever outside cult café-Bar Sedmica, so famous was it among Zagreb’s architects/artist/writer set that no advertisement was deemed necessary. It has now become easier for interlopers to find, even though the bar’s inner sanctum lies at the end of an anonymous-looking grey corridor. It still attracts a mildly bohemian crowd eager to squeeze inside its art-nouveau-meets-minimalist-ironmonger interior. The indie exotica on the sound system is curated carefully, as if to remind all and sundry that this is not your regular commercial pub.

Cahun hat shop

Millinery is one of those traditional Zagreb trades that can still hold its own against international competition, thanks to a clutch of local hat-makers that combine tradition with creative design. You will recognize Cahun by its discreetly distinctive shop-sign, picturing a monocled gentleman in top hat. Stacked inside is every manner of headgear for all genders, from summer straw boaters to the kind of thing you could wear to the races. For flair, affordability and a dash of retro chic, there are few better ways of covering your head.

Zagreb is the insider’s city that outsiders love to explore. Unlike some capitals, it doesn’t have just two or three iconic sites which daytrippers can manage in a single afternoon. Instead, its true character is revealed in unusual details and intimate charms and best experienced at a more relaxed pace, preferably across a longer duration. In summer, Zagreb is the ideal strollable city, life is lived outdoors, and its secrets are easily discovered. In winter however, society retreats behind its shutters, and the revelry of the advent season excepted, it’s that makes the city tick. The uniqueness of Zagreb is frequently hidden away in snug cafes, smoky bars and artisan shops, few of which advertise their presence to the casual visitor. Hopefully the list that follows will help you unlock the Croatian capital’s warm, welcoming and decidedly eccentric personality.
Zagreb behind closed doors

Pločnik Bar and PDV record shop
Given its street-corner position and neon sign, Pločnik is hardly a hidden gem. However, there is more to this craft-beer and clubby-dubby meeting place than initially meets the eye, with an intimate performance space hidden in the basement and a vinyl record boutique upstairs. As well as being a prime hunting ground for DJ-oriented electronics and dub reggae, the shop sells releases by local underground label PDV records, alongside a small but shrewdly-choosen selection of sweatshirts, T-shirts and designer bags that you just can’t get anywhere else.

ÆÆ
Pločnik, Masarykova 21, mgz.hr. Open 10am-5pm Thur.

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Ulični Ormar second-hand shop
Offering further proof that Zagreb’s off-street courtyards are well worth investigating, Ulični Ormar or ‘Street Wardrobe’ is the kind of vintage and retro clothing store that also bears witness to the city’s social history, documenting its changing styles and moods. It is almost like a theatrical costume in the number of potential new identities it offers its customers, with a carefully selected range of outfits dropping from hangars as if from the pages of some treasured, decades-old glossy magazine.

ÆÆ
Ulični Ormar, Jurišićeva 16

The Viktor Kovačić Apartment Museum
Not just behind closed doors but also up the stairs and under the attic, this semi-precious stone of a museum offers a unique insight into the interior design world of pre-World War I Zagreb. Architect Viktor Kovačić designed this city-centre residential building in 1906, reserving the top-floor flat for himself. Preserved in almost pristine original form, the flat is a treasure-trove of period furniture, boldly patterned wallpaper and intelligently-designed domestic utensils. The fact that it is only open on Thursdays adds to the charm.

ÆÆ
Viktor Kovačić Apartment Museum, The Viktor Kovačić Apartment Museum, Zapresićeva 11, mgz.hr. Open 10am-4pm Thur.

Karma Vinyl second-hand record shop
Croatia had a massive record industry in the 1970s and 80s, releasing a broad palette of local acts as well as licensing albums by all the big western stars. Not surprisingly, Zagreb is chock-full of second-hand vinyl. The suburb of Trešnjevka is the best hunting-ground for specialist shops; surfing your way through their amply-stuffed racks is another good way of penetrating the city’s complex cultural psyche. You would do well to check your map before setting off in search of Karma, housed in what looks like a conservatory in a residential side-street. Owned by legendary record dealer Archie, it is a great place to launch an exploration of Zagreb’s famously diverse new-wave scene.

ÆÆ
Karma Vinyl, Podgorska 3

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ÆÆ
Karma Vinyl, Podgorska 3
I was born in Breko. I was around 11 when my father, sister, and I moved to Austria because of the war. Mum was supposed to come and join us but she blew up the bridge and she got stuck there for a year. We were only in Austria for six months before my sister and me came to live with our uncle in Velika Gorica. I’m still there today.

Back in the village, we didn’t buy anything. Everything we ate came from the garden. We had all the vegetables, chickens, pigs. My mother was cooking constantly or in the garden. It really made me understand what it is like to produce food, not just to cook and eat it.

I finished school for cooking and then went on The Fifth Step, which is a little like Masterchef and then I went on The Fifth Step, which was a mixture of Italian, Mediterranean, Austrian, Hungarian and Balkan. We have four different culinary regions: Dalmatia, Istria, Zagorje and Slavonia. My favourite region’s cuisine is Slavonia. I love food which has strong flavours, like I had when I was growing up. My menus is less about Croatian cuisine than it is about local produce and ingredients. I don’t use so many imported ingredients. We are a hotel, so we have to offer things like cavac, Wagyu beef and salmon, but most of what we cook comes from Croatia.

My cooking is modern and simple. Local, fresh ingredients. I only offer things which I like to eat. I trust my own tastes. When I’m not working, I hang out a lot in Velika Gorica. There was success. They call me as soon as I finish work, so I often end up sitting in parks, playing and relaxing. I have a favourite café Barlietto in Stotka. It’s more of a nightbar, but I only like to go in the day. They have a big terrace. I was 17 years old when I first walked into this hotel. I had so many offers to move, but why should I? I’m doing what I love, surrounded by people who love. I really don’t have a reason to move.

I studied economics, marketing and TV and film directing, plus a year of journalism at New Mexico State University. New Mexico was something very different. It was in the desert. It rained maybe once a year. Everything you wanted to do, you needed a car. That’s one of the best things about Zagreb, you have great public transport and you can easily walk or cycle anywhere in the city.

Economics was my third choice, but it was the path I followed first because my parents were not happy with my other choices. It was the ‘90s and although I’d chosen economics, I started working at a local TV station, Dugavskaja Kabelska Televizija, run from an apartment in a Novi Zagreb tower block.

Back then, there was no internet, no satellite TV. Novi Zagreb was supposed to be a new design for housing, that’s why it had the cable TV access we used. Back then, it was a neighbourhood with lots of kids, 2,500 in just one primary school. Can you imagine? Every street corner, park and bench would be full of people on every sunny day. I had a few hundred friends and I knew maybe two thousand faces to say hello to. Today, those neighbours feel more empty the young people stay home, playing on computers.

Every day is different. One day you can meet a garbage man, the next day a pilot. We covered many sad stories connected to the war, then we developed the station with lots of fun and informative programs. After a few months, I stopped attending class and went only to the exams. All of my days and most of my nights I spent at the TV station. We ran it for a few years, but then we had a terrible tragedy where two of our friends fell from the apartment. After that, we felt we couldn’t carry on.

I then started working on HTV, later I worked for seven years on RTL. In 2015, the Discovery channel took four of my formats. Probably that made me the only Croatian with an audience of 450 million people.

For me, the best areas of Zagreb are the old parts, like Lenuzzi’s Potkova, Zrinjevac and so on, where old buildings are combined with green spaces. In the last few years Zagreb became a lot more beautiful as it tried to appeal to tourists. Sometimes I feel very proud to live here because there are so many nice places to go, parks, cafés, bars, buildings.

Zagreb is also a very safe city. I’ve travelled a lot internationally in my career and there are not so many cities you can walk around everywhere at night on your own. In Zagreb you can.

‘There are not so many cities you can walk around everywhere at night on your own. In Zagreb you can’
I was born in Normandy, but my family moved to Jura, next to the border with Switzerland, because of my father’s job. I first came to Croatia on a European programme for a three-month internship in Pula. I graduated in geography and the placement was as a geographer, but already in the back of my mind I knew I wanted to become a photographer. After my internship I came back to France for a couple of weeks. It was at that time I realised that I really like Croatia and that Zagreb would be the next natural step for me. I missed the lifestyle. People are peaceful and chilled here. There isn’t such a pressure like you find in big cities like Paris, where everyone is running around. In Zagreb, everyone has time to hang out over coffee. After the summer, I decided to extend my stay and I came back here.

I had no expectations when I arrived. When you have no expectations, everything comes as a positive surprise. It came as a surprise that the people in Zagreb didn’t speak Italian. In Pula, I had only spoken Italian, which I learned in school. Zagreb had a totally different history, much more Austro-Hungarian. It was in Zagreb that I started trying to make it as a photographer. Over a few years, I built up a reputation and a good network of contacts and clients. I believe that when you work to a good standard, this is the best advertisement you can make for yourself. At the beginning, I didn’t know what kind of photography I wanted to do, so experimented with lots of different styles, some sport, fashion, weddings. Eventually, I started to concentrate on destination photography and music photography. I started working for INmusic festival and that was a major turning point. One of the first big headliners I covered was Arcade Fire and I’m big fans. I was so inexperienced. These days I work for one of the biggest electronic music festivals, like Tomorrowland. Only the best in the industry get to do that.

Ten years ago was the beginning of the efforts to really promote Zagreb as a destination. When I started publishing my photos of Zagreb I received many messages. ‘Thank you for showing my city from a different perspective’, ‘I never saw my city this way’. Things like this. Figured out that maybe my photographs were different, I had a different perspective. Certainly, ten years later, I still see the city the same way.

I live in Krugu. It’s nothing special. Actually, I like it because it’s close to the bus station and I do a lot of travelling. My favourite place in Zagreb is probably Dolac. I go often, on coffee, buying vegetables and, of course, taking photographs. I also like taking photographs around Tomislavac. But my favourite place to photograph Zagreb is probably Sljeme. Sljeme is special. It’s unusual to see such a big area of nature right next to a European capital city.

JULIEN DUVAL

Julien Duval is a French-born photographer who moved to Zagreb ten years ago. Now he travels internationally as a photographer, taking pictures of the world’s best music events and for use in the travel industry.
OF THE NEW TALENTS to emerge from the post-Yugoslav generation of philosophers, Srećko Horvat is possibly the most intriguing. A citizen of the world, the philosopher has no fixed abode. "I live everywhere. Right now I'm on Vis island," he says. An author of over ten books, each filled with wry observations about the state of capitalism, Horvat hasn't exactly followed the traditional trajectory of a philosopher. He’s not much of a fan of tradition at all, really. The 36-year-old has been involved in every grassroots movement from Occupy to Extinction Rebellion, aiming to upset the status quo. He co-founded The Democracy in Europe Movement with Yanis Varoufakis and ran in the European elections this May. A loyal friend of Slavoj Žižek, he also hangs out with filmmaker Alfonso Cuarón and former Baywatch star Pamela Anderson. "The Philosophical Theatre is the only reason why I come to Croatia once a month," says Horvat. The Philosophical Theatre is his long-running project at the HNK Zagreb (the Croatian National Theatre). Set in an imposingly grand Austro-Hungarian building with a buttery-yellow façade, the event takes the form of an on-stage discussion between Horvat and a guest of his choosing. According to Horvat, the aim of the event is to redefine the relationship between philosophy and the theatre. "There is a direct link from the very beginning. From Ancient Greece to Bertolt Brecht and Jean-Paul Sartre, there is a really close connection between philosophy and theatre," Horvat says, paraphrasing the critical thinker Richard Senor, a former guest. "I think this legacy of theatre should be re-examined, in the sense that something has to happen in the theatre, or at least, once you get out of the theatre. A new thought, a new love, a new idea. Something really has to happen for it to be worth its title as a theatre."

"The Philosopher’s Theatre updates the rulebook when it comes to public lectures. The audience are treated to some of the biggest and..."
brightest names around, the vibe is casual, upbeat, and intellectual discussions are kept relatively jargon-free. The list of past guests is impressive—from British filmmaker Adam Curtis to Primal Scream's Bobby Gillespie, economist Thomas Piketty and the iconic, perception-challenging pop star MIA. It's helped to cultivate an entirely new audience for the National Theatre: ‘Every time Slavoj Žižek comes, there is a buzz. It’s a big spectacle, with a thousand people. The audience is very young which is great but on the other hand, it’s also diverse.’

Horvat puts a lot of its success down to the vision of the incumbent theatre director, Dubravka Vrgoč. ‘She really changed the content, the programme and the image of the HNK. It became respected in Europe.’ he says, appraisingly. ‘The theatre before her really became an old theatre, you know. The audience was mainly elderly people. I’ve got nothing against them, don’t get me wrong, but for a theatre, that’s a problem. For the Philosophical Theatre, a lot of new people came in it for the first time. And regular visitors to the theatre who wouldn’t usually go to such a programme started to come.’

You get the feeling that the philosopher is having enormous amounts of fun on stage, whether he’s analysing clips of Star Trek with Greek economist Yanis Varoufakis or chewing the fat with Vanessa Redgrave. ‘We try and play with the form of a public event’ Horvat says. ‘For instance, one of the first times Žižek was here, we started the Philosophical Theatre from a balcony. It was jokingly self-referential to the Muppet Show. Making fun of ourselves, basically, because we were speaking in this official public theatre.’

He also enjoys showing his visitors around Croatia, whisking documentary maker Adam Curtis across Rijeka in the footsteps of the proto-fascist D’Annunzio or partying all night with MIA. ‘I think they have a great time besides just talking and discussing. Because I think both are important, you know. The serious stuff is important but it’s also important to have fun.’

The idea for Philosophical Theatre arrived a few years after Subversive festival, a major meeting point for the political left, which he founded in 2008. ‘We began to organise events with keynote lectures, and it was pretty big.’ Horvat says. ‘I think Zagreb was really missing that content. Why does he think this kind of content is so popular right now? ‘Because in this historical moment, the past is forgotten, and no one believes in the future anymore,’ he says, bluntly. ‘People are immersed in social media, fake news. The attention span is that of a goldfish, and in these circumstances, philosophy serves not to offer easy answers but to question disturbing lessons.’

At a time when people are increasingly turning to TED talks and podcasts for enlightening ideas, philosophy is now more important than ever, according to Horvat. ‘Only by joining a dialogue and exchanging ideas will there be a movement towards hope in this world. So, I wouldn’t say it’s a coincidence that all over the world, philosophy is entering theatres.’
New shows to see

Jonathan Bousfield picks the best art on show in the capital this season

The Fifth Biennale of Painting + The Leipzig Connection

A decade ago, the idea of a Biennale of Painting might have seemed like a bad idea, an obstinate attempt to cling to a form of expression that the best young artists were simply not interested in anymore. Recently however the tables have been turned, with a new generation of Croatian artists finding new things to say with brushes and canvas.

Indeed this edition of the Biennale demonstrates just how compelling the Croatian painting scene has become, and just how many of the thirtysomething generation are standing in front of their easels. Among the highlights are the narrative landscapes of Stipe Tadić, the hyperrealism of Stjepan Šandrk, the disconcertingly deadpan weirdness of Pavle Pavlović, and the deceptively domestic idylls of Monika Meglić.

The new taste for messing around in oils and acrylics has led to renewed interest in the older generation of painters too: the vast, comic-strip-meets-graffiti pictures of Zoltan Novak (b. 1963) comprise one of the high points of this exhibition. There are also extraordinarily bold and frisky canvases by Đuro Seder who, despite being the oldest artist in the show (b. 1927), still paint like an iconoclastic punk eager to dethrone the cultural prudes.

Similarly compelling is the slide show of Zagreb murals, both outdoor and indoor, to remind us of how street art and studio-art are influencing each other and engaging public interest at the same time.

Acting as international partner of this edition is the German city of Leipzig, which has sent an incandescent collection of canvases that fill the gallery's ground floor. Without meaning any disrespect to the Croatian artists, it’s the Leipzig part of the exhibition that really leaps off the wall and into your brain. It all adds up to a convincing argument that painting is still very much where it’s at, and leaves you yearning to see more.

Alexander Calder

Somehow, the brightly-coloured abstract sculptures of Alexander Calder and the belle-époque opulence of Zagreb’s Art Pavilion seem made for each other. Several of the American artist’s famous mobiles hang from the pavilion’s high ceilings, providing the perfect counterpoint to the bare-torsoed titans who hold up the building’s central dome.

Calder (1898-1976) was one of the greatest sculptors of public works within the twentieth century, filling squares and plazas around the world with his thrusting, life-affirming forms. What we get to see here are his more intimate ‘indoor’ works, kinetic sculptures in lively reds and blues whose metallic petals sway slightly in the pavilion’s largely draught-free interior. With an accompanying series of lithographs and gouaches lining the walls, it’s an incandescent display that will linger in the visitor’s memory for a long time (which is a good thing, because you’re strictly forbidden from taking any photographs).

Calder was a man who believed that art should be joyous, playful, but also powerful. When living in Paris in the 1920s he was famous for making moving toys that starred in the ‘home circus’ performances held in his own flat. ‘He was never without a roll of wire and a pair of pliers in his pocket’ says one of the talking heads in the accompanying documentary film, before explaining how Calder would go to parties with them and sculpt wire portraits of people on the spot.

The fact that the Art Pavilion features a long uninterrupted gallery space (rather than a succession of separate rooms) allows you to choose your vantage points and gaze at the whole exhibition, rather than proceeding from one room to another and then out through the exit. The overall effect is stunning, and you may well end up spending longer here than you thought.

Art Pavilion (umjetnicki-paviljon.hr) until Jan 5 2020

Find the latest exhibitions at timeout.com/zagreb
Reflections from the Bauhaus

Founded a century ago in the German city of Weimar, the Bauhaus art school developed a programme of creative education that is still followed in colleges today. This exhibition looks at the way in which Bauhaus teachings influenced art schools in Croatia, with particular reference to the courses taught at Zagreb’s Academy of Applied Arts between 1949 and 1955 (when the academy was dissolved and merged with other institutions). Despite its short lifetime, the academy produced a generation of graduates who went on to wield influence over all aspects of Croatian culture. Featured artists include Zlatko Bourek, the painter and animator who was one of the creators of legendary cartoon character Professor Balthazar; Jagoda Buić, famed for her modernist tapestries and textile installations; and Vasko Lipovac, the mercurial all-rounder whose brightly coloured sculptures and installations remain the subject of much popular affection. All in all it’s a touching portrait of Croatia’s first post-war creative generation.

Art and Life Are One: the “Earth” Association of Artists 1929–1935

Founded ninety years ago, Zemlja or ‘Earth’ was one of the most influential movements in the history of Croatian art. As this major exhibition demonstrates, the artists who came together under the Zemlja banner shaped a distinctive Croatian visual style that is still very much around today. The main aim of the Zemlja group was to develop an art that could attract a broad public and also function as critique of an unjust society. According to Zemlja, art should play a documentary role in recording what life in the then Kingdom of Yugoslavia was really like: it was no longer enough to idealize the peasantry as some kind of folkloric national bedrock clad in traditional costumes, you also had to describe rural poverty and do something about it. The other key aspect of the Zemlja philosophy was the creation of an authentically local art that would have local roots, and which would not simply be an extension of the latest art trend from Berlin or Paris.

Most talented painter of the group was Krsto Hegedušić (1901–1975), an artist committed to depicting the realities of rural and working-class life. Together with painters Juraj Plančić, Ivan Tabaković and Oton Postružnik, he arranged exhibitions which had a clear socialist message. They formed the Zemlja movement in 1929, with architect Drago Ibler writing the manifest. ‘You have to live the life of your times’ it declared, ‘because art and life are one.’ Hegedušić also was a key sponsor of the self-taught village painters of Hlebine in Eastern Croatia, nurturing a ‘naïve’ style of rural painting that remains one of the key trademarks of Croatian culture. Being a member of Zemlja was a risky affair: Hegedušić was arrested several times in the 1930s for his left-wing beliefs, and after two big Zemlja exhibitions in 1932 and 1934, the association was banned. It was of enormous long-term influence however, and represents a unique and powerful episode in Croatian art.

Kovićevi dvori (gkd.hr) Oct 22 2019 – Jan 12 2020

Kovićevi dvori (gkd.hr) Nov 28 2019 to March 1 2020
Season’s

Searching for presents or just an excuse to drink lots of mulled wine in the name of festivity? Mark your Christmas calendars for these upcoming Advent fairs and markets in Zagreb.

ZAGREB IN WINTER? I bet you never imagined it could be so much fun, what with an Advent programme that embraces pre-Christmas markets and live music in several destinations. Sausage vendors and mulled wine stalls help to stimulate the senses. Wooden-roofed stalls sell everything from craft toys to traditional sweets, fruit preserves, specialty biscuits and gingerbread hearts. The music programme features a month-long season of outdoor gigs and DJ high-jinks.

Fuliranje
Fuliranje, which translates as ‘fooling around’, encourages passerbys to do just that. Leading Zagreb restaurants present their culinary expertise, while DJs play everything from funk to techno, with the aim of getting you all to drop your Christmas shopping and dance in the street.

Ice Park
Whether you glide across the ice like an Olympic figure-skater, or clutch onto the sides for dear life, ice skating is exhilarating fun. But if the very thought fills you with dread, you can retreat to the food and live music stage and watch the skaters falling over as you sip mulled wine.

Zrinjevac
The leafy Zrinjevac looks spectacular dressed up in fairy lights. The stand-out centrepiece is a majestic pavilion that hosts a regular programme of live musicians and children’s entertainers.

Klovičevi Dvori
Set in the gorgeous Habsburg-era old town, Advent at the Klovičevi Dvori has daily workshops to keep the kids busy and plenty of free concerts.

Feeling Christmassy? See more at timeout.com/croatia/things-to-do/zagreb-advent-guide
Christmas Tale
Based on Ban Josip Jelačić square, with happy crowds milling between mulled wine stalls, giant Christmas trees and choirs singing carols, you’ll struggle not to feel a warm festive buzz.

Jelačićev trg

European Square
Pitched as the young person’s Advent, the programme at European Square is decidedly more modern than traditional Advent happenings with concerts and DJ sets every night.

Europski trg (facebook.com/europskitrg)

Advent on Stross
The tree-lined Strossmartre parade, which holds the best views looking out over the city, is a romantic spot at any time of year, but it’s all the more magical in winter.

Strossmayerovo šetalište (facebook.com/ljetonastrossu)

Maksimir Park
The beautiful tree-lined Maksimir is thoroughly made over during Advent, with twinkly lights and wooden huts decorating the park.

Park Maksimir (facebook.com/adventmaksimir)
The most Instagrammable places at Advent

Put the elf in selfie with our guide taking Christmas-card perfect shots of Zagreb

Zagreb makes a pretty picture at any time of year. But at Advent, when Christmas mania sweeps the city, it reaches levels of dazzling that will get Instagrammers’ pulses well and truly racing.

Looking for logs by fires, presents by trees, and stupid amounts of sparkles? You’re in for a treat. Cameras at the ready – here are the ten most Instagrammable places in Zagreb at Advent.

Advent under the lanterns

Zagreb’s upper town is a place which retains a sense of the city’s history. On cobbled streets lined with grand Austro-Hungarian façades, you can almost feel the footfall of its former residents as you pass by dainty boutiques whose store fronts are bathed in the light of traditional street lanterns. Every day you can still see these gas lanterns being lit by hand as a city worker walks the whole route of 246 lanterns just before dusk in order to illuminate the streets. During this Advent, Christmas songs will accompany the ritual. Experience the glow of Christmas under the city’s pretty lanterns and take the suggested route from Saint Mark’s Square to Grič Park via Dragutina Freudenreicha Street, Antuna Gustava Matoša Street and Marković Square.

Lantern lighting will take place at 3.30pm on December 4, 5, 11, 12, 18, 19, 26

Grič tunnel

The Grič tunnel is an underground passageway which stretches beneath Zagreb’s city centre streets. It’s a good place to take distinctive shots throughout the year, but decorated with pine, nutcrackers, toys and festive lights, this ex WWll bomb shelter holds an altogether cherubic ambience at Advent.

Advent on Strossmayer

They really go to town up at the Strossmayer promenade, with Elf-worthy levels of Christmas bling, and enough voltage to power a small town. There’s usually a jazz quartet crooning round-the-fire songs plus stunning views across the city. If you don’t get that money-shot, you’re doing something wrong.

Ice skating rink at King Tomislav Square

Okay, so half of your feed will be churning out samey photos of ice rinks. You, however, can do it better, with a little help from the spectacularly lit ice-rink at King Tomislav Square. Even if you’re more into waddling around the edges than gliding across the floor, it’s worth the trip for that quintessential winter pic.

Maksimir Park

One of Zagreb’s less touristy treasures, this huge, forested park is dramatically beautiful in winter. This year a host of advent treats are happening here, including concerts, food stalls and outdoor museums. Cold, stark trees and the warm thrum of people – it’s a winning combination that your inner insta-fiend will relish.

St Mark’s church

If you haven’t taken a selfie in front of St Mark’s Church, then you haven’t really been to Zagreb – according to Instagram, anyway. Probably the most photographed sight in the city, this small Gothic masterpiece is loved by visitors because of its colourfully tiled roofs. At advent, with a squad of Christmas trees at its front, it looks even more special than usual.

Hnk Croatian National Theatre

The Croatian National Theatre is spectacular at any time of year and in order to not look underwhelming next to its architectural splendour, their Christmas decorations are incredibly impressive. The majestic building, all dressed up in wreaths and ribbons, looks like it’s straight out of The Nutcracker (which plays here again this Christmas). Don a duffel coat and get that Grandma-pleasing Christmas card shot here.

Ban Jelacic square

If you want to capture the spirit of Advent in full swing, get your camera downtown to the main square. This is the centre-piece, and don’t let them know it: no surface has been left un-sparkled, no tree un-bejewelled. If you’re lucky, you’ll get a flurry of snow - throw in the blur of a passing tram, and voila, you have the ultimate Instagram shot of Advent in Zagreb.

Zrinjevac

You’ll be hard pushed not to find an adorable scene to capture at Zrinjevac. This central city park is at the heart of advent happenings, and it’s endlessly Instagrammable.

With wooden huts selling steaming mulled wine, a tiny pavilion covered in lights, glittering tree-line walkways, and - the ideal selfie-spot - a fountain decked out in fairy lights.

Advent makes a pretty picture at any time of year.
Avoid the Christmas clichés with our guide to the coolest places at Advent

FEELING MORE DREARY than Christmas-cheery? Snap out of that winter malaise and explore Advent. In recent years the Croatian capital has become Europe’s coolest winter destination, which is largely thanks to its newly spiced-up Advent programme. What was once a cutesy Christmas market is now more like a rambunctious street party, with a contemporary air that sets it apart from its rivals in Vienna and Munich. There’s still plenty of mulled wine and the usual yuletide fare, but that’s all secondary to cutting-edge arts and culture and an absolute glut of genuinely original attractions. Dodge the Christmas clichés with our guide to Zagreb’s alternative Advent.

Watch Christmas flicks
Every day from December 14 to January 5, Kino Tuškanac will screen two different movies. The first, at 5pm, will be a popular cartoon or kids’ movie and at 7pm they will screen family favourites. From December 2, the entrance to the cinema will look like a grand premiere screening. Beginning on Ilica, at the courtyard entrance which leads up to the cinema, visitors will feel like VIPs arriving at the Hollywood’s Walk Of Fame. Outside the cinema, you’ll get the full red carpet treatment and be surrounded by thousands of Christmas lights decorating the facade and the trees. There’ll be popcorn and sweet treats available outside, adding to the fairytale scene. Whether it’s Elf, Home Alone or the Muppets, Film Advent at Tuškanac’s festive experience will make this Christmas feel like one of your first.

Shop for cool gifts at Artomat Fair
A godsend for those challenged in the gift-buying department, the Artomat fair sees local creatives gather in the Croatian Artists’ Association (HDLU) to resolve your Christmas shopping woes. With handmade ceramics, contemporary fashion, genuine artworks and craft beer on offer, you’re guaranteed to find a weird and wonderful gift.

Drink hot cocktails at Fuliranje
Move aside, mulled wine - who said that Sex on the Beach was only for summer? Get a hot version of your favourite cocktail at outdoor market Fuliranje, where you’ll find a host of other gourmet delights from around the globe. Roughly translating as ‘fooling around’, Fuliranje is the food-lover’s playground.

Dance to techno on the European square
As the edgier underbelly of Zagreb’s Advent, European Square – steps away from the central Ban Jelačić square – tends to attract a lively crowd of creative twenty-somethings after a place to dance. Some of Croatia’s biggest names take to the stage, with live music and DJ sets playing into the small hours.

Visit a secret tunnel
There’s nothing quite as festive as a World War II bomb shelter. Not convinced? Grič Tunnel is one of Zagreb’s more unlikely attractions, but it’s actually weirdly cute when it’s decked out in the colours, decorations and lights of Christmas.

Embrace the new year
Zagreb pulls out all the stops when it comes to New Year’s Eve, with a host of a fireworks show at Ban Jelačić square, and live music at Fuliranje to match. Though this year’s line-up is yet to be confirmed, it’s anything like last year’s – which included Grammy-nominated house maestro Todd Terry - then you’re in for treat.

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The best events in Zagreb this winter

### November

**Zagreb Night Run**
10-kilometre night run that takes you through the autumnal streets of Zagreb. Now in its eighth year, the run welcomes local and international participants, with the race setting off at 7pm from the pretty city centre park Zrinjevac. Pre-registration is required.
- ÆÆ
- Trg Nikole Šubića Zrinskog (onzen.hr). November 3.

**Mimika Orchestra**
Mimika Orkestar is an ensemble of expert Zagreb-based musicians who combine jazz and classical influences with Balkan folklorics. They are an astonishing band in the live arena and present a unique sound that you can’t find anywhere else. They have released several albums and are an expert Zagreb-based orchestra.
- ÆÆ
- Vintage Industrial Bar (entrio.hr). November 10.

**Anihilator**
Formed in 1984 and still fronted by founding guitarist (and now vocalist) Jeff Waters, Anihilator are one of Canada’s biggest-ever metal bands and the biggest from within the thrash sub-genre. They have released sixteen studio albums to date with their seventh Professoria being released in 2019. The band are a fundamental part of the scene and are known for their high energy live shows. They have been compared to Metallica and Guns N’ Roses for their powerful sound and stage presence.
- ÆÆ

**17th ZFF: Zagreb Film Festival**
The capital film festival presents over 100 films, which includes young and established filmmakers. The festival takes place from 14th to 24th November. The festival features a wide range of films from different genres and styles.
- ÆÆ

**Mick Harvey & J.P. Shilo with Steve Shelley & Glenn Lewis**
For anyone with an interest in outsider music or alternative rock, this concert is simply a must. Australian multi-instrumentalist Mick Harvey has been a vital contributor to alternative rock since the mid-’70s, when he was a founding member of Legendary band Joy, The Birthday Party, alongside Nick Cave. Harvey followed his friend into later band, The Bad Seeds and stayed for 22 years, departing in 2009 to end what had been a 36-year-long collaboration. In later years, Mick Harvey’s other great collaboration has been with English artist PJ Harvey (no relation). He appears here in a showcase alongside collaborator JP Shilo and with a band including Sonic Youth drummer Steve Shelley.
- ÆÆ
- Various venues. November 11.

**Brit Floyd**
Highly acclaimed UK-based Pink Floyd tribute act celebrates 40 years of the Floyd’s most famous concept album ‘The Wall’. The band performs the rock opera in its entirety. A semi-autobiographical rock opera by founding member Roger Waters, The Wall is one of the biggest selling albums of all time and explores themes such as self-imposed isolation, bullying, mental illness and even fascism. Audiences are transported through the eyes of a rather precious and privileged global rock star.
- ÆÆ
- Various venues (noc-kazalista). November 11.

**Interliber: 42nd International Book and Teaching Tools Fair**
Interliber is the largest literary event in Croatia and is a platform for the promotion of books, writers, reading, science, knowledge and teaching tools. It brings together the most important publishers and booksellers in the country and is attended by avid readers and members of a wide variety of teaching faculties. This is the fair’s 42nd happening.
- ÆÆ
- Zagreb Fair Congress Center (jentra.hr). November 12—17.

**Victor Ruiz**
Over the last decade, Brazilian born Victor Ruiz has become one of the top flight DJs operating on the Border between progressive house and techno. Now a resident of Berlin, he has collaborated with Deep Dream by appearing on the associated Yoshinishi label and by remaking

### Events

**European Theatre Night**
Taking place on the same night in many European countries, European Theatre Night is dedicated to the promotion of dramatic and performance arts. In Croatia, thanks to the success of the nationwide co-ordinating efforts undertaken by the Dubrava Children’s Theatre and the University in Dubrovnik, theatres and community centres across the country throw open their doors for a day of free performances, workshops, discussions and other interactive events. With an attached programme taking place on surrounding days it’s worth keeping an eye on their website for details. Here in Zagreb, almost all of the city’s theatres will take part, some of which usually hold international co-production developments. The 2019 programme is due to be revealed on November 11.
- ÆÆ
- Various venues (noc-kazalista). November 11.
Future Sound Of Zagreb 20th anniversary

One of the key annual clubbing events of the autumn/winter season, FSOZ has been reflecting the changing face of Zagreb after hours scene for two decades with shining acts on local talent and guest, Occurring over two nights at Boogalo, Friday’s opening session sees longstanding acts UB, Franjani, Tokes, Rudi, Mary and Hamid Ladj founders of Boogaloo, take charge with techno and house. Saturday night’s version is an hour-flowered marathon which runs until midnight on Sunday. Techno will rule the roost in the bigger room, with world-famous Spanish DJ Cristian Varela as the international headline act. He will play between sets provided by leading local DJs Irvan and Maris Nastic, with another room play psy-trance. The third space offers a mixed musical bag, but notable locals Tom Bug, PEZNT, Felv, Perp, Jugarde, Herya, Bunko and Mywa will ensure a high quality of sounds.

Godspeed You! Black Emperor

This tour date features a uniquely wired string quartet, a live drum/percussionist and Godspeed on piano, synthesizers and effects.

Tvornica kulture (eventim.hr), November 21.

Events

Hun-Hu-Hu

This four-piece from Tuva, on the border of Mongolia and Russia, play traditional folk instruments of the region and employ an otherworldly technique known as throat-singing, in which a drone note is sustained as two separate melody notes are produced simultaneously by one human voice. They have collaborated with the likes of Frank Zappa, ‘Johnny’ Guitar Watson, the Kool drummers, The Moscow Art Trio, Trilok Gurtu, Bodeer, the Kronos Quartet, The Chetartins and Bulgarian woman’s singing group Angelite and in more recent years added electronic elements and modern instruments such as electric guitar and bass.

Vintag Industrial Bar (eventim.hr), December 2.

Wiggle

Tech house is now so ubiquitous that it’s difficult to remember when it began. But it did. And its beginnings came in the mid-’90s from the Wiggle resident DJs and founders Terry Francis, Nathan Coles and Eddie Richards. Frequent visitors to Zagreb over recent years, these originators of tech house have nurtured a loyal following in the city.

Tvornica kulture (entrio.hr), November 22 + 23.

Mark Lanegan Band

Former Screaming Trees vocalist Mark Lanegan has rightly been identified as the greatest singer of the American grunge generation, his distinctive baritone called upon for collaboration by some of rock music’s coolest current characters such as PJ Harvey, Queens Of The Stone Age and others. Sometimes acoustic and folksy, at other times frenzied and fierce, he has turned his hand to many musical styles including electronica (as part of the last Soulsavers album project), as a prolific songwriter and performer, having released well over 30 albums and having circumnavigated the globe many times in order to play to fans. This date is in support of his 2019 ‘Somewhere’s Knocking’ album, released on UK label Heavenly Recordings.

Tvornica kulture (entrio.hr), November 26.

Repitter

Though they sing in Serbian, there’s no missing the power, groove and emotional impact of Repitter. Holding a hypnotizing and dangerous energy, their concerts have been enjoyed all across Europe. The music is raw and often aggressive, a back-to-basics rock’n’roll sound, distorted for the noise rock age. It has so far been heard across four albums. At their Zagreb show, Repitter will turn the tables on the crowd and their sound in a reciprocal way – creating a unique space for the audience to participate.

Tvornica kulture (entrio.hr), November 28.

Enrique Iglesias

The youngest of three children born to Spanish singing legend Julio Iglesias and Filipino socialite and magazine journalist Isabel Preysler, singer Enrique Iglesias has surpassed the success and fame of his father by becoming one of the world’s greatest Latin pop sensations. Since The White has lead an international life, touring the world in support of over 100 million albums and singles sales he has made worldwide, which make him one of the best-selling Spanish traditional Balkan music.

Tvornica kulture (entrio.hr), November 30.

Mark Lanegan and Boogaloozgb

Alongside friend, mentor and blues veteran Wadada Leo Smith, with whom he recorded the standing 2016 album A Cosmic Rhythm With Each Step, Virgins jazz pianist and Harlem resident Aaron Diehl is a serial award winner, critics favourite, touring collaborator and part-time aircraft pilot. He appears with his trio at Zagreb Music Academy on November 24. The festival’s final key performance, with its belonging to orbit Romance musicals features包括-row instruments such as electric guitar and bass.

Tvornica kulture (entrio.hr), November 26.

Acid Arab

Combining techno, electro and acid house baselines with traditional, religious and folk melodies of North African and Middle Eastern inspiration, Acid Arab are a DJ and producer collective who have long been regarded as one of the most trailblazing acts on the global techno scene. Their music is a unique blend of traditional and contemporary sounds, with an emphasis on Middle Eastern rhythms and electronic beats. Despite their musical influences, Acid Arab’s sound is distinctly their own, capable of both provoking surprise and captivating audiences.

Tvornica kulture (entrio.hr), November 26.

Zagreb Advent Run

Internationally attended fun run which raises money for charitable causes. Zagreb Advent Run is open to participants of all ages and abilities and is perhaps one of the most fun of all such happenings.

Tvornica kulture (entrio.hr), December 1.

NOVEMBER

Zagreb Jazz Festival

Zagreb Jazz Festival and its partner events in Croatia have been welcoming legendary names from the world of jazz for the last decade and a half. The list of previous guests is simply staggering, including Archie Shepp, Ornette Coleman, Sunny Rollins, Wayne Shorter, Ron Carter, Chick Corea and Dee Dee Bridgewater. The event’s 2019 edition similarly holds some extraordinary treats. Bassekou Kouyate is one of the celebrated American musicians of the last decade, a pianist and composer who has already produced twenty-three albums covering remarkably diverse terrain, most recently for the legendary ECM label. He appears at Zagreb Music Academy on November 23 alongside friend, mentor and blues veteran Wadada Leo Smith, with whom he recorded the standing 2016 album A Cosmic Rhythm With Each Step. Virgins jazz pianist and Harlem resident Aaron Diehl is a serial award winner, critics favourite, touring collaborator and part-time aircraft pilot. He appears with his trio at Zagreb Music Academy on November 24. The festival’s final key performance, with its belonging to orbit Romance musicals features including 2019’s LOVE & JETT’. His musical bag, but notable locals Tom Bug, PEZNT, Felv, Perp, Jugarde, Herya, Bunko and Mywa will ensure a high quality of sounds.

Tvornica kulture (entrio.hr), November 23.

Tvornica kulture (entrio.hr), November 24.

Tvornica kulture (entrio.hr), November 26.

Tvornica kulture (entrio.hr), November 28.

Tvornica kulture (entrio.hr), November 30.

Tvornica kulture (entrio.hr), December 1.

Tvornica kulture (entrio.hr), December 2.

Tvornica kulture (entrio.hr), December 6.

Tvornica kulture (entrio.hr), December 8.

Tvornica kulture (entrio.hr), December 26.

Tvornica kulture (entrio.hr), December 30.

Tvornica kulture (entrio.hr), November 22 – 23.

Tvornica kulture (entrio.hr), November 22.

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Tvornica kulture (entrio.hr), November 24.

Tvornica kulture (entrio.hr), November 25.

Tvornica kulture (entrio.hr), November 26.

Tvornica kulture (entrio.hr), November 27.

Tvornica kulture (entrio.hr), November 28.

Tvornica kulture (entrio.hr), November 29.

Tvornica kulture (entrio.hr), November 30.

Tvornica kulture (entrio.hr), December 1.

Tvornica kulture (entrio.hr), December 3.

Tvornica kulture (entrio.hr), December 4.

Tvornica kulture (entrio.hr), December 5.

Tvornica kulture (entrio.hr), December 6.

Tvornica kulture (entrio.hr), December 7.

Tvornica kulture (entrio.hr), December 8.

Tvornica kulture (entrio.hr), December 9.

Tvornica kulture (entrio.hr), December 10.

Tvornica kulture (entrio.hr), December 11.

Tvornica kulture (entrio.hr), December 12.

Tvornica kulture (entrio.hr), December 13.

Tvornica kulture (entrio.hr), December 14.

Tvornica kulture (entrio.hr), December 15.

Tvornica kulture (entrio.hr), December 16.

Tvornica kulture (entrio.hr), December 17.

Tvornica kulture (entrio.hr), December 18.

Tvornica kulture (entrio.hr), December 19.
with the vast majority of runners choosing to run in costume, many being seasonally themed. Pre-registration is a must. The race’s starting point is in front of the city centre’s Westin Hotel.

Various venues, Zagreb (zagrebadventrun.hr). December 8.

New Europe Market
A TV industry conference, founded in Dubrovnik and now also held in Zagreb. While the Dubrovnik event is more focused towards networking and professionals, the Zagreb edition this year places new content creation at the forefront of proceedings and therefore has a perhaps even greater international appeal. Key players of the TV industries in the USA, UK, Hungary, Belgium, Czech Republic and Estonia will attend and there is an English language TV writing contest which asks for competition entries. Speakers include Gabrielle Tana, an award-winning film and television producer and the keynote speaker is Harold Gronenthal, Executive Vice President, programming and marketing for AMC Networks International (AMCNI) across 130 countries. He is also a member of the Academy of Television Arts & Sciences, the International Academy of Television Arts & Sciences and the British Academy of Film and Television Arts (BAFTA).


At The Gates
One of the most significant Swedish death metal bands of the last three decades, At The Gates are credited with establishing a distinct sub-style of the music now attributed to their home city of Gothenburg. Their melodic take on death metal has earned them Swedish Grammy nominations and, despite two periods of extended hiatus, the band continue to tour the world with a lineup still recognisable from that with which they achieved fame in the ‘90s.

Tvornica kulture (eventim.hr). December 12.

Lepa Brena
One of the most popular singers of the former Yugoslavia, Lepa Brena is arguably the originator of the much-loved genre of turbofolk, known locally as cajke. Since the early-’80s she has been combining traditional, region folk styles with contemporary pop and disco to create a music of mass appeal and which sounds like no other pop music in Europe. Brena visiting Zagreb is such a big deal that a second night was added almost immediately to the original arena date.

Arena Zagreb (eventim.hr). December 14 – 15.

Ukrainian Classical Ballet / Tchaikovsky: The Nutcracker
Extended to a three-night run due to the huge demand for tickets, this show will see the world-renowned Ukrainian Classical Ballet perform the most popular ballet in the world. A true seasonal favourite, this magical tale is set on Christmas Eve, its wonderfully imaginative story popular with all generations, especially children. The musical score by Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky is absolutely timeless.

Concert and Congress Hall Vatroslav Lisinski (ulaznice.hr). December 15, 16 & 17.

Psssst! Want more great events this winter. Try timeout.com/croatia/things-to-do
Events

Masters of Dirt - Total Freestyle

A spectacular motocross show which has travelled the world. Masters of Dirt sees freestyle motorcyclists perform hair-raising stunts and jumps within a specially constructed theatre of ramps and runs. The daredevil antics are accompanied by thrilling indoor fireworks and other pyrotechnics, plus a slight show. In addition to the motorbikes, the action-packed show features BMX, MTB, QUAD and snowmobile riders.

Kočani Orkestar

Anyone searching for the wilder side of traditional Balkan music may have a tough time finding it in Croatia. But, once in a while, a group will visit, bringing back sounds that were once more commonplace here. Kočani Orkestar are a Macedonian Romani group who make a wild, fast, fun and festive sound.

Apocalypse

Originally formed in 1993 as a cello quartet playing exclusively covers of Metallica songs, in the two decades since then, Apocalypticus have added bands like Faith No More, Soporluta and Pantera to their repertoire along with a whole host of original material which treads a line between heavy metal and classical music.

FESTIVE MADNESS

Advent

Consistently voted the best Christmas market in Europe, Zagreb has plugged its efforts into evolving this aspect of its Austro-Hungarian past. Stalls on the pedestrianised streets around Trg Jeri Ćip will sell everything from craft 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. The main square, Zrinjevac, European and the 'Fullanin' alley of food and drink stalls are the main venues. The whole thing kicks off in the last week of November and continues right into the New Year.

Night of the Museums

The doors of Zagreb’s museums and galleries are thrown open, free of charge, for one night only at this incredible (and increasingly) popular annual event. Most institutions take part, and frequently one-off exhibitions and concerts are organised especially for the event. This will be the event’s 15th annual occurrence and success in Zagreb has prompted cities across Croatia to join in, meaning that these days not only locals but tourists as well can expect the tradition of their sound with the traditions of their sound with the traditions of their sound with the traditions of their sound with the traditions of their sound.

An event which exploded onto the world stage in 1994, the Gipsy Kings by Andre Reyes and Nicolas Reyes, the sons of renowned flamenco artist Josè Reyes, formed the Gipsy Kings in the late ’70s. French-born but of Spanish descent, they mixed the gipsy and traditional music of Spain to conjure a lively sound which exploded onto the world stage with the release of their self titled 1989 album. Guitarist and singer André Reyes maintains the traditions of their sound with a 10-piece band, including Mario Reyes and Chico Castillo, which tours the world playing new, original music but also all of the group’s familiar hits such as Bambolino, Volare, La Dona and more.

Zagreb Fair Congress Center (zv.hr). March 18 – 22. Zagreb Auto Show

Internationally-recognised annual car show which draws auto-fanatics from all across Croatia and further still, at Zagreb Auto Show you can see some of the latest car designs, special and futuristic editions of some cars and witness the premieres of new vehicles and innovations to the industry. A must for petrol heads.

Zagreb Dolce

The main regional showcase for documentary films, with an international range of the best contemporary work, and prizes for the best submissions. Showcasing over a hundred films, this thought-provoking film fest engages with a broad range of subjects: human rights, the environment, war and political conflicts, identity and sexuality as common themes. Prizes are awarded in numerous categories and the winning films are re-screened on the last day of the festival.

Festival of Lights Zagreb 2020

Zagreb’s annual Festival of Lights kicks off in March and for five days this run will transform the romantic upper town area of the city centre with a cavalcade of light shows and audio-visual treats. Expect dazzling installations at several historical venues, beautiful light shows across the city parks and green spaces, plus some mind-bending mapping performances that will completely alter your perception of famous landmarks and façades.

January

Snow Queen Trophy

International World Cup slalom events for men and women, on the north slopes of Grožnjan outside Zagreb. From its inception women’s events have been a key part of the programme, so much so that in December 28.

January

Zagreb 2020 Festival of Lights

FEBRUARY

Editors - Greatest Hits Tour

Birmingham-based band Editors have long since outgrown easy comparisons to Joy Division to become one of the UK’s most celebrated and biggest-selling alternative bands of the last decade and a half. Here, they play their largest concert to date in Croatia, an arena show which celebrates the release of ‘Black Gold’, a greatest hits compilation with three original songs.

March

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Reasons why you should join Zagreb Advent Run

Zagreb’s biggest costumed race is huge amounts of fun. Apply now and support the fight against melanoma

HAVe YOU ALWAYS WANTED to be a superhero? Well, now’s your chance to dress up as your favourite Marvel warrior and take to the streets in the name of do-gooding. On December 8, at 11am, thousands of runners from different parts of the world, dressed in all sorts of costumes, will gather for the fourth year in front of The Westin Zagreb Hotel. Their goal will be to support the fight against melanoma and turn Zagreb Advent Run into one of the biggest events of the Christmas festival.

The organisers of the race, Millenium promocija, Croatia’s leading marketing and communications agency, and Run Croatia, a company promoting sports and healthy lifestyles, invite all runners and Nordic walkers to come together to transform this race into one of the biggest Christmas sport events in Europe. In return, they promise a non-stop music, sport and educational programme over the two-day period.

In Croatia, over two people develop melanoma every day. The number of people suffering from melanoma in Croatia is increasing each year, and the organisers of this race wanted to do something about it. Free skin screenings are offered to runners in cooperation with Zdravi pod suncem. Part of the registration fee will be donated to preventive mole examinations, as early treatment offers the best possible outcome.

‘We are looking forward to another successful and fun Zagreb Advent Run, and this year, we organised a two-day event for our participants. For the first time, race participants will have the opportunity to enjoy a great program a day before the race, on December 7. After that, runners will get starter packs, a rich music program, and a sports education program; as well as the option to have a free preventative mole examination and expert skin protection consultations in conjunction with the association Zdravi pod suncem,’ said Mario Petrovic, CEO of Millenium promocija.

Runners can choose between two courses, five or 10 kilometres, and will be joined by Nordic walkers. Last year’s race brought together more than 2,500 runners from as many as 29 different countries. They passed by fabulously spruced-up Christmas locations such as Zrinjevac, Ban Josip Jelačić Square, Britannia square and Ilica.

All interested participants - friends, families with children, pets, runners and walkers can register until November 24th on the official race website: zagrebadventrun.hr.
There are times when only good home cooking will do. Despite its reputation for crisp clear weather, Zagreb can also be quite cold in winter, and this is when Croatian comfort food comes into its own.

While Zagreb has seen a boom in creative cuisine and global street food in the last few years, this has in no way taken the shine off the enduring appeal of the traditional hearty home comfort dishes that no self respecting neighbourhood restaurant could afford to do without. For vegetarians, the two-veg repertoire and also scores top marks for štrukli.

Kod Šime
A legendary neighbourhood bistro perched above a popular park, Kod Šime is the place to go for stews and grills, with a daily list of ready meals chalked up on a board outside. BEST FOR: grah with sausage (act quickly as this ultra-popular dish usually sells out by 2pm), obanac, čufte.

Apetitlih
“Food like grandma used to make” it says on the website of Apetitlih, an intimate off-street bistro that caters to the table in big tureens with massive ladles. Punjene paprike (peppers filled with minced meat), sarma (cabbage leaves stuffed with meat and rice) and ričet (lean pork chop, delicately grilled). BEST FOR: stews (varado) made with seasonal vegetables; jungić (bean pork chop).

Purger
Purger is something of a Zagreb lunchtime classic, an enduringly popular place that has resisted the urge to change in decades old way of doing things. The menu lists all the right bases with grilled meats, tripe soup, and an exemplary grah. BEST FOR: punjene papke (stuffed peppers), here served in a creamy red sauce and an accompanying platter of mashed potato.

Vinodol
This Zagreb institution has for years prided itself on offering everything under the Croatian culinary sun. Baked lamb, grilled fish, Mediterranean pastas and risottos: it’s all here. BEST FOR: Vinodol is one of the best places in town to tuck into a dish of baked štrukli, although you can’t really go wrong whatever you order.

Pri Zvoncu
Delivering rustic charm in the heart of a modern suburb is a difficult trick to pull off, but Pri Zvoncu manages it with aplomb. They cook up vast pots of offal on different days of the week, offering grah with sausage on Mondays, tripe soup on Thursdays, sausages and stews and sausages accordingly to the season. BEST FOR: Pri Zvoncu specializes in hearty meat dishes ideal for a winter blow-out. With everything from schnitzels to roast veal knuckle and suckling pig, this is one place to come hungry and linger.

Vallis Aurea
As you might expect from a restaurant that specializes in eastern Croatian cooking, Vallis Aurea is one of the best place in the city to sample paprika laden obanac and other goulash stews. Daily specials from Monday to Friday feature grah, meatballs, nici and other stomach fillers. BEST FOR: domaće pečenice (home-style sausages), tasty thin bangers served with lashings of picked cabbage.

Stari Fijaker
This superbly situated restaurant has retained a loyal army of local customers as a result. Listed below are just some of our favourites.

Croatian comforts
Jonathan Bousfield takes a look at winter food and where to find it. There are times when only good home cooking will do. Despite its reputation for crisp clear weather, Zagreb can also be quite cold in winter, and this is when Croatian comfort food comes into its own. While Zagreb has seen a boom in creative cuisine and global street food in the last few years, this has in no way taken the shine off the enduring appeal of the traditional hearty home comfort dishes that no self respecting neighbourhood restaurant could afford to do without. For vegetarians, the two-veg repertoire and also scores top marks for štrukli.
Sometimes the best meals still come out of a brown paper bag. Khaos, the Thai takeaway on the corner of Vlaška and Trg Drače Iblera, only opened in May 2019, and is already one of the biggest word-of-mouth successes that Zagreb has seen in years.

Located in a glass booth just outside the Importante Gallery shopping centre, a space that hardly provides enough room to hold a ladle never mind swing a cat, Khaos’s two-woman team somehow succeeds in cooking up a culinary typhoon while taking orders and bagging up the meals at the same time. The menu keeps things simple, with stir fries of rice or noodles served up with a three-way choice of chicken, veal or tofu. The exemplary Pad Thai (63Kn) tastes and feels superior to those we have tried in trendy fusion restaurants on the Adriatic coast; while the Green curry (49-56) will hit spots that other Croatian attempts at exotic food rarely reach. The spring rolls (18Kn for three) are crunch-perfect.

Unsurprisingly there’s usually a queue, and the kiosk’s limited opening hours ensure that it’s a mid-day or late-lunching option only. Waiting times vary from 15-25 minutes, but they do tell you how long you will have to wait (and they are usually correct in the estimates), ensuring that you can go for a stroll while anticipating the lip-smacking treats due to come out of the hatch.

Khaos

What is it?
A hole in the wall Thai street food restaurant.

Why go?
For the best Pad Thai and Tom Yum in the city.
Hot coffee, warm soul

Need somewhere to warm your cockles? Check out these cosy cafés which offer a light, comfy ambience.

**Finjak**
The extravagantly decorated Finjak is unique enough to attract custom from anywhere in the city centre. A Belle Époque-style decor, with swirling chandeliers, pastel-pink cushions and huge golden picture frames, Finjak is the place to sip coffee, eat cake and live out your Parisian fantasy. It’s even cosier in winter, when the staff add twinkly fairy-lights and cutesy Christmas decorations.

Vlaška 78 (098 130 0057, facebook.com/caffebarfinjak)

**Botaničar**
One of Zagreb’s best-looking venues, the café is a lookbook for retro furnishings, scattered with 70s hairpin-legged tables and bright velvet sofas. The café aesthetic theme is inspired by the nearby gardens: leafy plants are everywhere, with hanging creepers flowing out of oak cabinets. A soundtrack of gently jazzy music and the occasional chanson provides a relaxed, low-key atmosphere.

Trg Marka Marulića 6 (facebook.com/BotanicarZagreb)

**U Dvorištu**
Hidden in an off-street courtyard, this mellow café next to a music shop has a loyal clientele. 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.

Jurja Žerjavića 7/2 (facebook.com/cafeudvoristu)

**Quahwa**
Quahwa an easy walk from the main square, located in an attractive courtyard on Teslina. The interior is cool without feeling cold: cushiony 70s armchairs and tables are strewn haphazardly about the polished parquet. Look out for their winter range of hot adulterated coffees - they’re delicious and unmissable.

Teslina 9 (01 3639 074, facebook.com/quahwacoffeeloversonly)

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Drinking

If quirky, imaginatively-designed cafés are what you’re after, then Martićevo is the place to find them. Program goes for a rather novel refurbishment-in-progress look, with bags of builders’ cement stacked under the tables. Artwork on the walls and pink chairs on the ceiling provide a degree of abnormality, without taking anything away from the café’s eminently comfortable and relaxing vibe.

Martićevo 14 (098 993 8279, facebook.com/programbar)

Need a caffeine fix?
Try timeout.com/croatia/bars
Slavonija avenue 22f, Zagreb Croatia

Only 7 minutes drive (or 25Kn taxi ride from the centre). In rush hour give it 15 minutes…

Tram stop a few minutes away. Free parking for 100s of cars.

**Opening Hours**

Monday – Thursday 11:00 to 23:00

Friday 11:00 to 02:00 or later

Saturday 12:00 to 02:00 or later

Sunday 12:00 to 20:00

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Escapes

Fabulous winter day trips from Zagreb

A pleasant drive or easy bus journey from the capital, these five destinations make a memorable day out in winter

Sljeme

Sljeme, the upper slopes of Medvednica nature park on Zagreb’s northern doorstep, was made for winter. Its international ski centre opens up, but many locals are also happy to hike in the snowy landscape, popping in for warming, traditional mlinci pasta with turkey or bean soup in a rustic chalet eatery.

Trakošćan

Open every day throughout the winter, the fairytale castle of Trakošćan is an easy drive from Zagreb and dominates a wondrous landscape when its large artificial lake freezes over and the many surrounding firs turn white with snow. Within the Drašković family pile, you’ll find original furniture, portraits and weaponry.

Varaždin

The Baroque magnificence of Varaždin, the mansions and palaces of Croatia’s former capital, looks even more striking when snow surrounds its cobbled streets. Beneath the red rooftops of stark white Varaždin Castle, period furniture, weapons and ceramics merit investigation before a rewarding hot chocolate in the café by the entrance.

Samobor

The classic day trip from Zagreb, picture-postcard pretty and easily accessible, Samobor draws hikers and sightseers on romantic winter Sundays. Culture is one attraction – writers, artists and composers, Franz Liszt included, would meet in atmospheric cafés here. Another is the signature local cream cake, samoborska kremšnita, that they still serve.

Dugo Selo

The Church of St Martin looks down on this tranquil town of 10,000 souls 20km east of Zagreb. Vineyards surround the Church of St Martin in Martin Breg on the northern outskirts, besides which a seven-metre high statue of the saint has local symbolic significance.

Trakošćan Castle

Varaždin

Sljeme

Find more great escapes this winter at timeout.com/croatia/destinations

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ÆÆ sljeme.hr

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ÆÆ dugoselo.hr

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ÆÆ trakoscan.hr

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ÆÆ varazdin.hr

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ÆÆ samobor.hr

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ÆÆ sjljeme.hr

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ÆÆ trakoscan.hr

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ÆÆ varazdin.hr

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ÆÆ samobor.hr

Find more great escapes this winter at timeout.com/croatia/destinations
Escapes

Plitvice
The magnificent cascading lakes and waterfalls of the Plitvice National Park take on a majestic appearance when covered in a blanket of snow, its waters dramatically frozen. Not only are there no crowds, but the entrance fee from November through March is 60kn, as opposed to 250kn in high season.

Ivanić-Grad
A health resort 25km south-east of Zagreb, the former border town of Ivanić-Grad is best known for the Baroque Holy Trinity Parish Church and its links to the automotive industry. As well as being the base for electric sports-car manufacturer Rimac, it holds major rallies and, at the many lakes nearby, fishing competitions.

Jastrebarsko
Set in beautiful wine country south-west of Zagreb, Jastrebarsko is home to Eždiji Castle, surrounded by parkland. The town dates back to the Romans, with finds displayed in the City Museum. Also on view is the royal charter of King Béla IV, granting Jastrebarsko free-city status in 1257.

Krašić
The pretty hamlet of Krašić, 50km south-west of Zagreb, is a bucolic getaway located near the Kupčina river with several pretty waterfalls nearby.

Križ
Close to Ivanić-Grad, Križ was similarly a border town until the collapse of the Habsburg Empire in 1918. It lies close to Vrzik, where a statue and memorial room pay homage to Croatia’s most famous opera singer, Milka Trenka, born there in 1863.

Sveti Ivan Zelina
Lending its name to the Zelina wine road that runs through it and the many surrounding communities, Sveti Ivan Zelina dates back many centuries as a visit to the town’s museum will attest. Nearby Zelingrad-Zelinska gora was first mentioned in chronicles in 1295.

Sveta Nedelja
Close to Samobor just west of Zagreb, Sveta Nedelja is best known for the Baroque Holy Trinity Parish Church and its links to the automotive industry. As well as being the base for electric sports-car manufacturer Rimac, it holds major rallies and, at the many lakes nearby, fishing competitions.

Velika Gorica
Close to Zagreb Airport, Velika Gorica is the main town in the historic Turanj region, named after the long-horned cattle that became extinct in the 1500s. This history can be traced in the Turanj Museum by the tourist office. Nearby Lukavec Castle was the seat of Turanj nobility.

Vrbovec
North-east of Zagreb, Vrbovec is a town of some 16,000 people, surrounded by some 50 villages. Once on the outskirts, Vrbovec was where the revered writer Maša Jurč Zagorka was born. Coma’s first woman journalist and activist for women’s rights. Her books remain among the most popular in Croatian literature.

Žumberak-Samobor Hills
A protected Nature Park since 1999, the Žumberak-Samobor Hills lie 25km from Zagreb on the border with Slovenia. Typified by waterfalls and mountain streams, they are home to the rare aquatic bird, the white-throated dippers. Also here is the Rudinjak prehistoric site, with rare Iron Age finds.
Music

Party time!

Marc Rowlands takes a look at five of the independent promoters helping to make Zagreb’s contemporary clubbing calendar as good as it’s ever been

Tanzen

Club collective Tanzen can usually be found holding monthly nights at the Aquarius club, on Jarun lake, where they have their love of the German house and techno scene taken to near obsession levels. In the past 12 months, they’ve played host to Berlin’s Wagergate club, leading label Get Physical, the amazing Roman Flügel, the Tiefschwarz duo and pivotal tech house player Steve Bug, whose Poker Flat Recordings was the last guest on October 25. Representing Poker Flat on the night were Romanian producer/DJ Mihai Popoviciu and mainstay Markus Homm. On October 31, Tanzen returned with Theus Mago aka Mexican producer Mano-González, who records as Bitt for Kitsuné and Decosmick, as Sonido Fantasma on Turbo Recordings and is also co-head of the Duro label. On November 22, things head off in a more micro house and minimal techno direction as the Kompakt label visits. Cologne producer Jonathan Kaspar, UK-based DIY electronics freak Rex The Dog and fast-rising Kompakt associate Ańii will represent. The last Tanzen of 2019 is on December 20 with former Trouw resident Patrice Baumel but the night launched a new off-shoot, Schmeckt, at Aquarius on Thursday October 31.

Imogen Recordings

Imogen Recordings is a disco and house label run by Zagreb-based DJs Antonio Zuza and Ilija Rudman. Since 2015, the label has released music from contributors including Rudman, legendary Chicago house vocalist Robert Owens, Metro Area’s Darshan Jesrani and Italian deep house original, Don Carlos. Their tenure as a label has been accompanied by some great intimate club nights in the city, often using venues that are far from the imagination and reach of other promoters, including nights with guests like Ashley Beedle, Charles Webster and Fred Everything. They also use their own pristine sound system at the nights. For their fifth anniversary, they held a weekend birthday party at Super Super. On Friday November 8th, veteran of Detroit’s pivotal Motor City and boss of Nat Dem DJ Kai Alcé rejoined the team. On Saturday November 9th it was the turn of DJ Garth of Grayhound Recordings and wild San Francisco parties fame who made his Croatian debut on the occasion. They will return in December for a party with Compost Records’ Rainer Truby.

Zagreb’s BSH events have taken a fearless approach to promoting parties in the last half decade they’ve been active. Seemingly upping the ante on almost every occasion, they hold outdoor raves in an inspired line-up of venues which include the foothills of Mount Sljeme, the upper town sports area of BSC Šalata, the rooftop of the Museum of Contemporary Art, Maksimir Park and even, most recently, Zagreb’s old airport, Pleso. If you’re having one of their infrequent raves while you’re here, be sure not to miss it. Their latest indoor incarnation is Ciferšlus, which aims to combine art and rave, and is held at Lauba’s multi-functional arts and events space. The latest was October 4th with guest Mousse T and they returned to Lauba on October 31 for a Halloween ‘Dia De Los Muertos’ special.

Find the best parties at timeout.com/croatia/music

Futurescope
Music

Miniwal

Having held only two parties at club Aquarius so far, it’s difficult to establish the exact ethos, sound and reputation of Miniwal. But, the night is run by Gana Elez and some of the team behind the longstanding Sindikat party, which held 20 or 30 parties over the last few years at Masters club, so locals know what to expect and have followed them faithfully into the new venture. Whereas Sindikat concentrated on tech house, delivered exclusively by DJs from the Croatian underground, Miniwal, as the name suggests, has a slightly more minimal, micro-house sound. To date, they’ve had international guests headline each party with a changing roster of domestic DJs playing beforehand. One of the night’s key elements is the unique dressing of the venues undertaken by the team, Gana’s speciality, her artistic eye also being employed at some of the region’s big, annual rave events. Team members have (and are still) involved in the We Love Sound festival, held outdoors in summer by Jarun lake, and further afield at the coastal Sonus Festival. Their next party will be at Club Masters on December 14.

Futurescope at Boogaloo

Like almost everywhere in Europe right now, techno is at the peak of its popularity. You can find techno nights at several clubs in the city, notably Depo, but perhaps the best rave pit for this music is Boogaloo. A multi-roomed, multi-purpose venue, you can find anything from Balkan folk music to internationally famous heavy metal bands on their live stage and a variety of club nights take place in other rooms. Their techno nights like Tech Room and, in particular, the in-house Futurescope are populated by rake thin, Adidas-clad youths who dance with an inhuman amount of energy and enthusiasm. The nights are perhaps not the best place to impress on a first date, but if you’re planning on staying up until the next afternoon with your best crew, there are few better places to do it than here.

The last few nights of note saw UK techno titan Dave Clarke visit on October 26 and a Halloween special with Petar Dundov and Seraphim Codex. On December 12 tech house originators Wiggle visit the club.
WITH CONTEMPORARY selections from the world of international cinema, it’s no surprise to find Australian, Belgian, Canadian, Icelandic and Serbian films within the well-curated programme of this year’s ZZFF. From dark comedy to touching drama and intriguing thriller, we preview six films set in distinct, local circumstances, but which examine issues that are universal.

**Babyteeth**
The feature-length debut for theatre and TV series director Shannon Murphy, its young male and female leads delivering incredible performances, there’s a fresh and quirky bent to this funny, Australian coming-of-age drama. Much to her parents horror, seriously ill teenager Milla falls in love with Moses, a small-time drug dealer with a tattooed face. But, after witnessing the affair’s transformative effect on their daughter, mom and dad embrace the relationship and reap positive rewards themselves.

**Jojo Rabbit**
Polynesian Jew Taika Waititi directed this film, his ethnicity and religion important to note as within this somewhat controversial dark comedy, he also assumes the role of Adolf Hitler, the imaginary best friend of lead character Jojo ‘Rabbit’ Betzler. Jojo is a shy, timid and lonely child, hence his nickname, but he finds some form of belonging in the 1940s within the Hitler Youth. However, he must confront the political ideologies he holds when he discovers that his mom is hiding a young Jewish girl in their attic.

**Our Mothers**
Guatemala’s prolonged civil war has resulted in disappearances, atrocities and genocide. As the trials of former military commanders get underway, forensic anthropologist Ernesto must try to identify bodies of the deceased. While he does, he stumbles upon a lead to the whereabouts of his long-missing father, a guerilla soldier. This Belgian film won Guatemalan director César Díaz the Caméra d’Or at the 2019 Cannes Film Festival and was Belgium’s entry for Best International Feature Film at the Oscars.

**Patrick**
Patrick saunters through life as a handyman within the sheltered surroundings of his parent’s naturist camp. But, things start to get a lot more demanding when Patrick loses his favourite hammer. The hammer’s retrieval is then amusingly set as a taught and dramatic psychological thriller by the director. But, is it the hammer that Patrick is truly searching for? Patrick is the debut feature film of Belgian director Tim Mielants, who has several episodes of hit TV series Peaky Blinders and Legion to his credit.

Marc Rowlands picks six unmissable films from Zagreb Film Festival
The County
Socio-political Icelandic filmmaker Grímur Hákonarson of ‘Summerland’ fame returns to Zagreb, his second movie ‘Rams’ having opened Zagreb Film Festival in 2015. Like ‘Rams’, this latest offering is set in rural Iceland, a conservative and male-dominated environment. Ridden with debt following her husband’s death in a car crash, middle-aged cow farmer Inga must battle against the corrupt system of the local co-operative if she’s to keep her head above water.

Ivana the Terrible
As Bucharest-based filmmaker Ivana Mladenović was finishing her 2017 debut feature film, ‘Soldiers: Story from Ferentari’, she was struck with a mystery illness which caused her hair to start falling out and prompted epileptic fits. She decamped to Kladovo, the Serbian village on the Romanian border where she grew up and promptly engaged in an affair with a much younger Serbian youth. Like ‘Soldiers’, this movie is a fictionalised and exaggerated account based on this true story and similarly stars non-actors, including Mladenović in the lead, plus her real family and friends. The portrayal here of village life in the Balkans will chime with the vast majority of audience members.

Keep up with the latest Croatia film news at timeout.com/croatia/art-culture
Good Croatian film dramas are coming along with increasing frequency, but it’s still difficult to get English-language audiences to watch them without investing a huge amount of time in explaining the context. Antonio Nuić’s film Mali (the Croatian submission for the Best Foreign Language Film in the next round of Oscars), however, is the kind of big-city, funny-but-grim drama that has universal reach.

The film centres around former jailbird Frenki (Franjo Dijak) whose wife is terminally ill in hospital, and who is afraid of losing custody of his son, Mali (Vito Dijak). Unfortunately, his strategy for keeping hold of his son depends on the same mixture of dodging and diving that got him into trouble in the first place.

Most of the action takes place in the gritty areas of Zagreb that could double for any urban sprawl, with the tower blocks, car parks and pedestrian alleyways of Novi Zagreb and Savica providing an abrasive counterpoint to the Croatia of the tourist brochures and travel magazines.

We follow Frenki (though these unglamorous concrete suburbs as he assembles a group of old mates in preparation for some kind of big weekend outing – whether they are planning a barbeque or a heist is never really clear. These preparations largely consist of getting horribly drunk and playing the boy Mali’s video games. (And it is Mali who seems to be the only responsible adult in the group.)

It’s an impressive ensemble performance featuring the best of Croatia’s middle-generation actors, with Frenki’s friends Hrvoje Keckeš as “Keco”, Bojan Navojec as “Boki”, Rakan Rushaidat as “Goc” laughing and squabbling their way through a lost weekend.

However there is something sinister looming behind their bonhommerie, and just when you start thinking that the film is a comedy-drama about a group of drunken forty-something friends, something unexpectedly dark happens and the film adopts a larger dimension.

For Frenki a life of crime pays rather better than the no-future jobs in which the likes of Keco, Boki and Goc are trapped. What is more, Mali is more aware of his father’s activities than we originally thought. In dysfunctional societies like Croatia, there are many ways to cheat the system, or perform favours for those who will cheat on our behalf. Very often, the “smartness” we pass on to our children is simply an amplified version of our own amoral talent for getting by.
Christmas gift guide

All the inspiration you need to make Christmas shopping a total cymbal

Denim jacket by Neha Neha
A Zagreb-based company that upcycles jackets with handmade embroidered patches and original artwork, Neha Neha is a refreshingly cool, totally-sustainable fashion company that’ll add an explosion of colour to your Christmas wishlist.

Keks na Eks
Do you love cookies? And booze? Then you’ll want to try these special treats. Made with traditional Croatian spirits, crunchy cookies are packed with three different fillings: figs with pelinkovac, plum brandy and sweet wine with raisins.

The Garden Christmas Porter
This velvety, vanilla and cocoa-infused porter tastes just like Christmas. A seasonal special from Zagreb’s Garden Brewery, this is one to to stock up on – it’s only available during winter.

Latte cups from Marinski Heartmades
Ideal for the coffee fanatic in your life, these latte cups are beyond cute. Featuring a swirl of watercolour landscapes. If you really want to impress someone, there’s matching bowls to accompany them.

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Facebook.com/nehanehaclothing

Hot sauce by Spicy Days
Spice up your Christmas with this chilli set from Spicy Days. Ranging from smoked to yellow habanero to red hot ‘scorpion’, this excellent rack of Croatian-made sauces is sure to add some fire to the dinner table.

Facebook.com/djurdjaprettyface

Glass baubles from Koogle
Looking for a tasteful way to decorate your Christmas tree? Drop the tinsel and grab a few of these handmade baubles from Koogle. The glass orbs are open-topped and you can fill them up with whatever takes your fancy – the creative possibilities are endless.

Facebook.com/koogle.hr

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Facebook.com/marinski.me

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Facebook.com/spicydays.hr

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A Zagreb-based company that upcycles jackets with hand embroidered patches and original artwork, Neha Neha is a refreshingly cool, totally-sustainable fashion company that’ll add an explosion of colour to your Christmas wishlist.

Facebook.com/nehanehaclothing

Hot sauce by Spicy Days
Spice up your Christmas with this chilli set from Spicy Days. Ranging from smoked to yellow habanero to red hot ‘scorpion’, this excellent rack of Croatian-made sauces is sure to add some fire to the dinner table.

Facebook.com/djurdjaprettyface

Glass baubles from Koogle
Looking for a tasteful way to decorate your Christmas tree? Drop the tinsel and grab a few of these handmade baubles from Koogle. The glass orbs are open-topped and you can fill them up with whatever takes your fancy – the creative possibilities are endless.

Facebook.com/koogle.hr
Hotels

GET INTO THE FESTIVE SPIRIT THIS CHRISTMAS AT ZAGREB’S BEST HOTELS

WITH EVER MORE visitors coming for Zagreb’s fabulous Christmas market, the city’s hotels, guesthouses and even hostels get equally seasonal. Here are ten recommendations in town and in wintry landscapes nearby.

Hotel Antunović

Already geared up for parties with its Prom Nights under a glittering disco ball, the panoramic Hotel Antunović lays on festive treats in its Argante restaurant but doesn’t need to embellish the view from the rotating Vertigo bar – just provide the usual fine cognacs and cigars. Relaxing spa centre, too.

ÆÆ
Zagrebačka avenija 100A, hotelantunovic.com

Hotel Dubrovnik

All winter up to New Year’s Eve, the Hotel Dubrovnik right on Zagreb’s main square is offering three-night weekend packages. Guests can take full advantage of the classic Café Dubrovnik and contemporary American Steak & Grill House. Airport transfers are also available upon request.

ÆÆ
Gajeva 1, hotel-dubrovnik.hr

Esplanade Zagreb Hotel

With its Advent brunches and weekends, Christmas Eve dinner and other festive fun, not to mention huge tree, the legendary Esplanade Zagreb Hotel always goes to town at Yuletide. Given its railway heritage based around the Orient Express, there’s a sense of Agatha Christie mystery about the place in any case.

ÆÆ
Mihanovićeva 1, esplanade.hr

Main Square

Right by Scalinatela’s plac with all its Advent attractions, the Main Square Hostel is the ideal lodging for those who want to take advantage of Zagreb’s Christmas festivities without paying top whack in a hotel. Couples on a budget can book the private room with en-suite facilities.

ÆÆ
Tkalčićeva 7, hostel-mainsquare.com

Hotel Tomislavov Dom

For that real away-from-it all winter experience within easy reach of Zagreb’s Christmas market, the three-star Hotel Tomislavov Dom sits amid the romantic Medvednica Nature Park. Guests can relax in the pool and jacuzzi, tuck into hearty Croatian dishes in the Tomislav restaurant and follow hiking trails in the woods.

ÆÆ
Sljeme.hr

Plitvice Holiday Resort

Warm, cosy and rustic, surrounded by wintry pines, the year-round Plitvice Holiday Resort has easy access to Croatia’s stunning national park five miles away, where frozen lakes and waterfalls provide a magical experience. En-suite rooms can be booked as half- or full-board accommodation, and bungalows are also available.

ÆÆ
Grabovac 102, plitvice.com

Sheraton Zagreb Hotel

For a relaxing holiday break right in the heart of town, the Sheraton can provide a heated pool and traditional Croatian dishes in the homely King Tomislav Restaurant, paired with fine domestic wines. Also dressed up for the occasion, the late-opening Piano Bar serves a range of seasonal cocktails.

ÆÆ
Kneza Borne 2, sheratonzagreb.hr

Swanky Mint Hostel

Don’t be put off by the strange name – Swanky Mint is an award-winning hostel right on Ilica, close to the Christmas market. Converted from a Habštita-erab textil works, it offers a mix of private rooms, studio apartments and dorms, plus discounted excursions to the winter wonderland of Plitvice Lakes.

ÆÆ
Ilica 50, swanky-hostel.com

Hotel AS

If you fancy spending Christmas surrounded by woods, in the greenery of Tuškanac easily accessible from the attractions of downtown Zagreb, then the Hotel AS is an ideal choice. Within, all is timeless charm, the restaurant, the café and the large rooms appointed with antique furniture.

ÆÆ
AÆ
Zelengaj 2, hotel-as.hr

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ÆÆ
Tkalčićeva 7, hostel-mainsquare.com

Looking for something different?

Try timeout.com/croatia/hotels

Hotels

Get into the festive spirit this Christmas at Zagreb’s best hotels

The Westin Zagreb

With its Crystal Ballroom, Kapetan restaurant and Allegro Terrace decked out for Christmas, and renowned mixologist Zoran Surla fxing up seasonal combinations in the Diana Lounge, The Westin Zagreb welcomes guests here for the holiday season. Prepare for the festive overload with an afternoon in the extensively refurbished spa centre.

ÆÆ
Vinkupina 1, westinzagreb.hr

Seasonal stays

‘For that real away-from-it all winter experience within easy reach of Zagreb’s Christmas market’
Set in Kaptol, the upper town of central Zagreb, the long-successful Brainy Center has recently expanded to meet the extra demand for its services. Parents love what we do and children love to come back to the safe and fun environment we provide. Now, when they attend, they have a full 200 m² to explore, over two floors, including three modern classrooms, two individual sections for workshops and individual work and two playrooms.

Native Croatian families and expat parents alike have found the right place for their children at Brainy Center. Far more than just daycare for working parents, Brainy Center will educate your child through play and activities in order that they develop their motor functions, social and emotional skills and their intellectual abilities to the best possible level.

To our popular existing programs like Brainobrain and Get Ready For School programs, this autumn we will introduce new programs such as Sleepover Stays, Speech Therapy, Playsroom on Saturdays, Birthday parties, Etiquette Academy, Yoga, Exercises for Moms and Babies and Exercises For Pregnant Women.

Brainy Center staff have years of experience working with children of school and pre-school age while some staff also hold qualifications in physiotherapy and psychology. They provide a holistic approach to your child’s stimulation and education, meeting the specific needs of every child who attends.

Brainy Center specializes in preparing children for their next stage of schooling, making sure kids are at, or beyond, the level they need to be to make the most of the next step in their education. Our expertise extends to giving the required attention to gifted children and to those with special needs.
One of Europe’s most celebrated city breaks, Zagreb’s medical industry offers world-class practitioners and facilities at competitive prices.

Cost with no drop in the essential high-quality of treatment. That’s why the culturally vibrant, classically Habsburg capital of Zagreb receives the lion’s share of health tourists to Croatia. The artistic, political and commercial heart of the country, Zagreb is an unassuming capital can offer top-notch treatments and facilities.

In order to promote Croatia as an increasingly reliable and better-known destination for top-quality healthcare, Minister Gari Cappelli has pledged 400 million kunas. Health services and private clinics in Zagreb are the initiative’s lead, offering reputable experts, technologies and services. Clients in many EU countries already recognize that Zagreb’s private health care sector offers top treatment at competitive prices, with expertly trained professionals and hospitals at the level of quality you’re entitled to expect. The country’s savvy professional sector offers top treatment at competitive prices, with expertly trained professionals and hospitals at the level of quality you’re entitled to expect.

The Westin Zagreb contains a vast health centre, Spa break

The Westin Zagreb offers a range of massages, from Swedish to Turkish, with a variety of oils and aromas. The health centre is designed to provide a relaxing experience, with a range of treatments available, including facials, massages, and body treatments.

One of the most popular treatments is the Swedish massage, which involves long, rhythmic strokes and deeply penetrating pressure to relieve muscle tension and promote relaxation. The therapists are highly skilled and use a range of techniques to ensure a truly rejuvenating experience.

Another popular treatment is the facial, which involves a deep cleansing of the skin, followed by a treatment to nourish and hydrate. The Facial is performed by experienced technicians, who take the time to understand the specific needs of each client and tailor the treatment accordingly.

For those looking for something more indulgent, the Spa at The Westin offers a range of treatments that are inspired by the local Croatian culture. The treatments are designed to provide a truly immersive experience, with a focus on relaxation and rejuvenation.

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Extravagant luxury

Elegance itself, the Esplanade Zagreb Hotel has a health and beauty spa offering a range of treatments and packages. The spa offers a range of massages, facials, and body treatments, as well as a range of wellness and fitness classes.

The spa’s facilities include a sauna, steam room, and fitness centre, as well as a range of relaxation areas. The spa’s therapists are highly skilled and use a range of techniques to ensure a truly rejuvenating experience.

One of the most popular treatments is the Signature Massage, which combines deep tissue work with gentle, soothing techniques to provide a truly relaxing experience. The Signature Massage is a true treat for those looking for a relaxing and rejuvenating experience.

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Rejuvenating treatment

Down in the south west of the city close to the Panorama Hotel, La Crème prides itself on providing the latest rejuvenating treatments. Currently this means wood therapy, developed in Colombia by using implements originally designed by ancient cultures 2,000 years ago. Today it helps in the battle against cellulite, in the legs, tummy and upper arms.

Deep relaxation

For soothingly deep relaxation, look East. Each of the main massages at the Thai Centar Thalae – aroma, hot aroma, relaxing oil, relaxing hot oil, Swedish and prenatual – can last for as long as two hours and involve a range of oils. For the aroma and hot aroma options, choose between lavender, rosemary, lemongrass or ylang ylang. For the Swedish massage, Thalae recommends a 30-minute meltdown in the same.

Total indulgence

You can find wellness treatments in the city centre, within the art nouveau landmark Hotel Palace. The Wellness Centar Melgoes Big on coctherapy, as well as milk-and-honey treatments, one for anti-ageing, the other for hydration. There’s also a Finnish sauna on site for a complete afternoon’s indulgence.

Wellness Centar Melgoes, Katančićeva 4 (01 4893 157, wellness-melgoes.com)

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Wellness Centar Melgoes, Katančićeva 4 (01 4893 157, wellness-melgoes.com)
The light of day

Svjetlost is the leading eye clinic in Southern Europe and provides world class treatment and advice

SVJETLOST EYE CLINIC has evolved from a small ophthalmology practice to an established chain that is a leader on the global ophthalmology scene. Patients travel from across the world to access cutting-edge eye care, impeccable service, and affordable pricing.

Centre for health tourism

Croatia is no longer known as just a land of sea and sun. Prestigious clinics, expert physicians, first-rate facilities, and the latest technology have made it a blooming location for medical tourism. Croatia is a beautiful and safe country, within easy reach of most major European cities. It offers top-quality health services, affordable care, and a picturesque, comfortable environment in which to recover. So, it is no surprise that increasing numbers of patients have recognized Croatia’s potential as a leading healthcare and wellness destination.

Major news channels, including NBC, CBS, and FOX, reported on Ivana Trump attending the Svjetlost Eye Clinic to have Symfony artificial lenses implanted. Franco Nero and Armand Assante also solved their visual problems at the top Croatian clinic. However, Svjetlost is not just for celebrities. Each and every patient at Svjetlost receives the same high level of individual attention, treatment, and care.

Leadership, expertise, and excellence

Svjetlost Eye Clinic was founded by Nikica Gabric Ph.D., an expert eye surgeon, and pioneer of laser vision correction. A man with big dreams, the hospital director has a passion for ophthalmology that is reflected in every team member. Professor Gabric’s unique experience, knowledge, and attention to detail have helped make Svjetlost Eye Clinic a leading ophthalmology destination. The patient is always the priority, with the hospital providing a customer-centric service that strives to match the high levels at world-leading medical institutions.

SEE MORE! www.svjetlost.hr
Bright light and sharp vision

The Croatian word Svjetlost translates as light. Over 22 years, the surgeons at Svjetlost Eye Clinic have performed 125,000 eye surgeries. Professor Gabric and the ophthalmology team have brought sharp vision and put the light in the eyes of 350,000 contented clients. Svjetlost Eye Clinic provides comprehensive eye care. Ophthalmology specialists offer screening for disease, diagnosis of eye problems, treatment of degenerative eye conditions, and leading-edge techniques to improve eyesight and optimize vision.

The world’s top three eye clinics

Synergy intraocular lenses have revolutionized eye care. With increasing age, vision can deteriorate. Many people over 40 need glasses to read, check their phones or drive. With innovative implantable lenses, glasses can become a thing of the past. Clear, continuous vision can now be achieved for people with presbyopia or age-related farsightedness, even in dim lighting. The clinic’s experts said: ‘For patients, it means good sight at every distance, in other words, a life without glasses.’ Svjetlost Eye Clinic is one of the top three clinics in the world for Synergy lens implantation. Ivan Gabric, MD, and the Svjetlost team were selected to work in partnership with Johnson & Johnson on this prestigious project because of the clinic’s extensive experience and excellence in ophthalmology.

Awards and rewards

Svjetlost Eye Clinic has won international awards for excellence and the consistent quality of care. These include the respected ophthalmology Oscar and the renowned International Star Diamond Award in 2018. However, it is the life-changing procedures, supportive care, and satisfied clients that set the Svjetlost Eye Clinic apart. They have helped consolidate the clinic’s reputation as a foremost world’s brand and a global leader in ophthalmology and eye care.

Svjetlost Eye Clinic, Heinzelova 39, 10 000 Zagreb. +385 1 777 5656. https://svjetlost.hr/en. Parking free. Mon-Thu 8:00-20:00; Fri 8:00 - 18:00.
SINCE ITS OPENING 20 years ago, Bagatin has become a synonym for quality service. The clinic now has three leading-edge facilities across Croatia, each matching the highest international standards. Bagatin offers over 250 treatments and procedures in nine different specialties to help improve patients’ appearance, self-esteem, and wellbeing.

Skilled cosmetic care from head to toe
Celebrity stories and social media have helped drive the growth of cosmetic surgery, minimally-invasive treatments and aesthetic dentistry. Bagatin offers a range of cosmetic procedures, from laser to lip-fillers and liposuction, to help patients feel confident and look good.

The clinic offers expert breast surgery, including augmentation, reduction, and lifting. Facelifts, rhinoplasty, tummy-tucks, and body-sculpting procedures are also available as well as anti-wrinkle injectables and laser resurfacing treatments.

Bagatin is the only clinic in Croatia to offer consultation using innovative VECTRA XT 3D software. The surgeons use the technology to create an image of the projected results, so that patients can visualise the outcome and make informed choices about the procedure.

SEE MORE! www.poliklinikabagatin.hr

Time Out Zagreb Winter 2019

Looking good

The Bagatin Clinic is an internationally accredited centre for aesthetic treatments and cosmetic surgery. The top Croatian clinic combines the professionalism and care of a medical institution with a spa-like focus on beauty, comfort, and client satisfaction.

Contact Us: +385 1 4610 225 • www.bagatinclinic.com

Your beauty destination

www.poliklinikabagatin.hr
Dermatologists and specialist cosmetologists can treat signs of sun-damage and restore a youthful glow. Resurfacing using chemical peels, laser, or microdermabrasion can improve the appearance of the skin. Injectable aesthetic therapies can smooth wrinkles, lift cheeks, and enlarge lips.

Affordable expertise
The knowledge, experience, and skills of surgeons and staff are critical to the success of cosmetic surgery and aesthetic treatments. The expert team at the Bagatin Clinic includes highly-qualified plastic surgeons, maxillofacial surgeons, ENT specialists, and dermatologists. Bagatin provides specialist procedures at the highest-quality at a price that is cost-effective compared to clinics across Europe, America, Canada, and Australia. The cost of breast augmentation starts from €3.549, innovative VASER liposculpture ranges from €3.200, and the price for a nose job starts at €2.499.

Bespoke health tourism
The Bagatin Clinic has a bespoke medical tourism department offering international clients customised care. Personal assistance is provided throughout the treatment journey; travel planning, accommodation, and airport pick up can all be arranged. Clients can relax and recover, knowing that the clinic’s staff are always on hand to offer support and guidance.

Clinic choice across Croatia
Bagatin has clinics in both Zagreb and Split. In the historic Croatian capital, there are two modern facilities for quality aesthetic care. The clinic in the Green Gold Tower has a high-tech laser facility, a specialist weight loss and body contouring centre, and a dermatologist-led skin clinic.

The original Bagatin clinic in downtown Zagreb boasts more than 20 years’ experience in maxillofacial, dental, and cosmetic surgery. The clinic is now located in a brand new building, equipped with the very latest technology and surgical devices.

Bagatin’s Split clinic has state-of-the-art treatment suites. Conveniently situated in the luxury Hotel Dioklecijan & Residence, it’s a 10-minute walk to the city centre, Diocletian’s Palace, and the beautiful Croatian coast. The hotel’s stylish rooms, rooftop pool, and spectacular panoramic views make it the perfect place to relax and recuperate following treatment.

International recognition
Bagatin’s excellence in cosmetic treatment and care is internationally recognised. It was named International Cosmetic Surgery Clinic of the Year (2017) at the prestigious IMTJ Medical Travel Awards and the Leading Dermatology Clinic in Europe, according to Global Clinic Rating (2018).

The clinic continues to excel; in 2019, IMTJ has announced Bagatin as a finalist for the International Cosmetic Surgery Clinic of the Year and Best Marketing Initiative. Bagatin Clinic is organising the first congress dedicated to patient experience, EPIC. In collaboration with the international presenter, Cleveland Clinic, known for its highest standards and levels of patient care, the congress will take place on March 19–20 2020.

The European Patient Experience and Innovation Congress
The European Patient Experience and Innovation Congress (EPIC) is being launched to explore the relationships among healthcare delivery, technology, private enterprise and the humans who need and want these services. EPIC will embrace the scientific, clinical, behavioural and social perspectives, ranging from the futuristic, highly theoretical to current, best-in-class practice. The European Patient Experience and Innovation Congress will be a high-energy, stimulating event for everyone, from C-Suite executives to clinical practitioners, clinic owners, scientists and investors. EPIC brings together some of the most influential physicians, MedTech startups and health professionals from Europe and beyond to the table to improve how your patients will experience healthcare in the near future.

Bagatin Clinic, Green Gold Tower, Grada Vukovara 269/a, 10000 Zagreb. Donji grad, Frana Folnegovića 1c/1, 10000 Zagreb. Dioklecijan Hotel & Residence Kranjčevićeva 45/1, 21000 Split. +385 1 46 10 225. info@bagatin.hr. www.poliklinikabagatin.hr/eng. Mon-Fri: 08.00-20.00.
50 YEARS OF TIME OUT, 
50 YEARS OF CITY LIFE, 315 CITIES