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ZADAR REGION





Explore. Zadar

Surrounded by the Ancient Mediterranean

The great film master Alfred Hitchcock was sprawling in a narrow plastic chair as he was admiring the threads and shades with which the sky weaved the sunset over the Zadar channel. The famous Hollywood director was sitting on the Zagreb Hotel terrace at the Zadar waterfront back in 1964 when he had already left far behind many classics of the genre. The tension in the sky heightened; the weight of the ripe and dense orange atmosphere tore the purple mist above the islands of Ugljan and Pašman and the dazzling glow of the turquoise blue sky.

The other islands in the distance merged like an unclear clay mass.

Hitchcock blew smoke from his beloved *Habanos* high upwards. The smoke slowly spread and cleared, and above the islands of the Zadar archipelago, the evening fantasy continued to unleash in an unseen whirl of colours. The day was disappearing, and it did it in a unique way. The Zadar archipelago embraced its dazzling theatricality in each of its coves, inlets and bays.

When we add up other islands from the Zadar archipelago to the islands of Rava, Ist, Iž, Molat, Premuda and Olib, which belong to Zadar, there is a group of 17 larger and 11 smaller islands. However, suppose we add the close islands of the Kornati, which in different epochs formally belonged to Zadar families. In that case, there are more than a hundred islands, which makes the Zadar archipelago a unique phenomenon on the Adriatic. Although, at first sight, they look the same like the vegetation which in the bare ambience of rocky ground and countless dry stone walls compassionately covers them, life has persisted throughout centuries in all possible ways.

From Venus from the Vlakno site on Dugi otok from the Stone Age and Iron Age Liburnians who left traces everywhere, to modern islanders who on Rava believe that they live in the centre of the world, or the proud Iž residents, who crown their king every year, traces of that life are present everywhere. As the mainland from the hinterland slowly and lazily retreated towards the city, blending its local colour into a dynamic and urban ambience, the insular remained self-sufficient for millennia.

The island was never a possibility, but a way of life of the ancient Mediterranean.

The Island of Rava

On the hilly and uneven surfaces of the island, its residents terraced the hillsides for centuries, creating spectacular enclosures for olive groves and vineyards. Rava is an island of figs, carob, almonds, pomegranates, oranges, lemons, tangerines, walnuts, sorb-apples, peaches, plums, blackberries or blueberries, so perhaps this is why on Rava they believe that they live in the centre of the whole world.









The Island of Iž

Iž has been inhabited since prehistoric times, so every year the self-confident people of Iž choose the *King of Iž*, but also the *Queen of Iž* in a unique ski race during the Advent events. The island is known for pottery and a special souvenir, *Iški lopiž*, a clay pot in which olive oil is stored. The food prepared in it, residents of Iž say, has an exceptional taste.



The Island of Ist

Ist is a traditional destination for boaters, anglers and professional divers due to the local waters full of fish. There is no traffic on the island, and there is only one settlement of the same name. Still, it is full of legends and supernatural stories that are carefully nurtured and passed down from one generation to another. From the air, it looks like a thickened letter H.







The Island of Molat

There is a library on Molat that has 12,000 books and more members than the island's inhabitants. Molat, Zapuntel and Brgulje are the settlements on the island and are all connected by a road built by islanders and Molat weekend cottagers. Molat has a museum; it is full of bays and beaches, some of which are sandy. It has been inhabited since the Stone Age.



The Island of Premuda

It is the westernmost island which belongs to Zadar. It is overgrown with holm oak and olive trees and has two ports with one ferry quay. Premuda is known for its attractive diving sites and cave system, which is called the Cathedral due to its spectacular and enchanting beauty. It is connected by ferry with all the surrounding islands and Zadar.



The Island of Olib

The coastline of the island of Oliba is over 30 kilometres long with sandy and shallow beaches tucked into holm oak forests. The oldest registers of births, marriages and deaths in Croatia, from the mid 16th century, were kept on Olib, and they were written in the old Glagolitic alphabet and later in Latin. Olib also has a sinkhole in the shape of an amphitheatre because it is enclosed within a massive dry stone wall and staircases.



Petrčane, in a Touch of Beauty

Streaked with olive groves, pine forests, vineyards and attractive beaches, the town of Petrčane is synonymous with a tourist destination that has preserved its heritage and upgraded it with modern facilities. Petrčane is located at the foot of the slopes of beautiful vineyards, so the view of the place enchants with the blue of the sea and spacious sandy beaches, hilly greenness of vineyards and the immense freshness of the sky. Local tradition takes the name of Petrčane from the story about two brothers, Petar and Zana just as St. John and St. Paul were also brothers and martyrs from the 4th century.

Petrčane is a peaceful tourist resort located between Zadar and the historic town of Nin and a favourite excursion area all year round. In summer, it is an oasis for whoever wants to swim in the crystal clear sea and revel in the joys of summer. From its sandy beach Petrčane, incredibly inspiring and spectacular is the view of the summer sunset. Then, before the incoming evening freshness, the whole town merges into the dark-shaded colours of the setting sun. There are numerous historical remains in Petrčane, so the church of St. Bartholomew from the 12th and 13th century, as well as the church of St. Sabina, bear witness to the long-gone Middle Ages. In historical documents, Petrčane was first mentioned in 1071 in the Cartulary of the Benedictine Monastery of St. Mary in Zadar during the sale of land, which now grows the vineyards of the famous wine-growing house Kraljevski vinogradi, which cultivates indigenous Croatian grape varieties.

Petrčane is a tourist destination, so the hotel Pinja is located in a unique position within a peninsula overgrown with pine trees and holm oak. Beautiful beaches are part of the hotel environment, while on the other side of the port of Petrčane, there is a boutique hotel Petrčane. Falkensteiner Hotel & Spa ladera and Falkensteiner Premium Apartments Senia, as well as Sunnyside Apartments, are top accommodation facilities that have raised the tourist offer of Petrčane in the area of Punta Skala to the highest level.

Peaceful and streaked with olive groves and vineyards, Petrčane is in touch with the beautiful.









Surrounded by the Spectacular Beauty of Nature

Zadar's surroundings are immensely endowed with natural beauty because it is surrounded by five national parks and three nature parks. On its northern side stretches the mythical mountain Velebit with the eponymous Nature Park and the Northern Velebit National Park, while on the sea Zadar is surrounded with island pearls whose bays are an eternal inspiration for travellers. Nearby is the Paklenica National Park with its canyons, which is on the UNESCO World Heritage List, as well as the pearly islands of the Kornati National Park immersed in the timeless beauty of the Adriatic Sea. From Zadar, you can easily and quickly get to the historical town of Skradin and the Krka National Park with waterfalls and natural environment that take your breath away. It is also easy to reach the globally known natural phenomenon of the Plitvice Lakes National Park. The range of natural beauties is perfectly rounded off by the Telašćica Nature Park and the Vrana Lake Nature Park, which are home to many plant and animal species.

An abundance of natural beauty, picturesque coastal towns, islands with ancient Mediterranean culture and historical little villages with stunning remains of the past, are located in the even more immediate surroundings of Zadar. Nin is the most famous historical town in the Zadar region, which looks like an open-air museum with the saltworks that fed the emperors of ancient Rome. The area of Ravni kotari is gifted with lush vineyards, fine wines, organic orchards. There is also the mighty Asseria, i.e. the remains of the ancient city, which looks as if the Cyclops themselves had built it.

All these destinations in the vicinity of the city are easily accessible by cycle paths, the existing historical routes, wine roads or the cheese roads as the cheese was produced in ancient Dalmatia more than 7,000 years ago. Gastronomy is an essential and unbreakable link between Zadar and its past because food is still cooked, baked and prepared in the same way as in the distant past.

The foundations of ancient Zadar seemed to have been decided by the gods endowing it with so much beauty.

Vrana Lake Nature Park

The largest natural lake in Croatia is a habitat for many marshy plant species, but it is also an ornithological reserve, so in addition to holiday-makers, it is also enjoyed by bird watchers. Due to the source of drinking water and fertile soil, the area of Vrana Lake has been inhabited since prehistoric times. It has cycle, hiking and instructive paths.





Velebit Nature Park and Zrmanja River

Velebit is a mythical Zadar giant, a sung mountain in which karst valleys, abysses, crags and mountain ridges kiss each other. It is the largest protected area in the Republic of Croatia and the most important endemic hub of flora and terrestrial fauna. Both mountaineers and hikers adore it. East of the Maslenica Bridge, just before the A1 motorway plunges into the Sveti Rok tunnel, a view opens onto an unusual amphitheatre-shaped ravine that will attract the attention of many a passer-by with its distinctive shape and extensiveness. Right at the bottom of this unique stone funnel lies the source of the Zrmanja - one of the most beautiful rivers in the Adriatic basin. Zrmanja is a river of six canyons containing and preserving the pristine, wild nature of the Zadar hinterland.



Paklenica National Park

Paklenica National Park covers an area of 95 km², on the slopes of southern Velebit. In a relatively small area, there is an exceptional wealth of geomorphological phenomena and shapes, diverse flora and fauna, attractive landscapes and untouched nature. The name Paklenica most probably comes from black pine resin, the so-called "paklina", which was used by the local population in folk medicine, for healing wounds, then as a lamp - for lighting and coating wooden boats.



Telašćica Nature Park

Telašćica Nature Park is the pearl of Dugi otok with surreally beautiful beaches with steep white cliffs in the background. The area is rich in geomorphological phenomena, an abundance of flora and fauna, and archaeological heritage and valuable seabed communities. Telašćica is visited by some of the 220 species of bottlenose dolphins, and the grey falcon also comes.





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