



Zagreb

01 / POP 792,875

Includes ➔

| | |
|------------------------------------|----|
| Around Zagreb | 68 |
| Lonjsko Polje Nature Park | 68 |
| Medvednica Nature Park | 70 |

Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Vinodol (p59)
- ➔ Mundoaka Street Food (p59)
- ➔ Lari & Penati (p60)
- ➔ Karijola (p60)

Best Places to Stay

- ➔ Studio Kairos (p57)
- ➔ Esplanade Zagreb Hotel (p57)
- ➔ Hobo Bear Hostel (p55)
- ➔ Hotel Dubrovnik (p57)

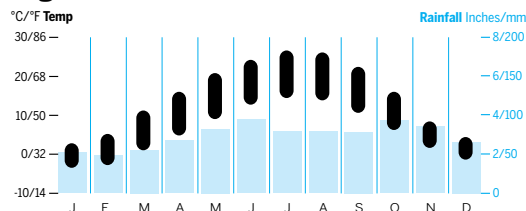
Why Go?

Zagreb has culture, arts, music, architecture, gastronomy and all the other things that make a quality capital city – it's no surprise that the number of visitors has risen sharply in the last couple of years. Croatia's coastal attractions aside, Zagreb has finally been discovered as a popular city-break destination in its own right.

Visually, Zagreb is a mixture of straight-laced Austro-Hungarian architecture and rough-around-the-edges socialist structures, its character a sometimes uneasy combination of the two elements. This small metropolis is made for strolling the streets, drinking coffee in the permanently full cafes, popping into museums and galleries, and enjoying the theatres, concerts and cinema. It's a year-round outdoor city: in spring and summer everyone scurries to Jarun Lake in the southwest to swim or sail, or dance the night away at lakeside discos, while in autumn and winter Zagrebians go skiing at Mt Medvednica (only a tram ride away) or hiking in nearby Samobor.

When to Go

Zagreb



Apr & May The city takes off its winter coat and pavement cafes become a beehive of activity.

Jun Some of Zagreb's best festivals liven up its streetscapes and provide plenty of cultural fodder.

Sep & Oct People return from holidays and the city buzzes with summer energy.

History

Zagreb's known history begins in medieval times with two hills: Kaptol, now the site of Zagreb's cathedral, and Gradec. When the two settlements merged in 1850, Zagreb was officially born.

The space now known as Trg Bana Jelačića became the site of Zagreb's lucrative trade fairs, spurring construction around its edges. In the 19th century the economy expanded with the development of a prosperous clothing trade and a rail link connecting Zagreb with Vienna and Budapest. The city's cultural life blossomed, too.

Zagreb also became the centre for the Illyrian movement. Count Janko Drašković, lord of Trakošćan Castle, published a manifesto in Illyrian in 1832 and his call for a national revival resounded throughout Croatia. Drašković's dream came to fruition when Croatia and its capital joined the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes after WWI.

Between the two world wars, working-class neighbourhoods emerged in Zagreb between the railway and the Sava River, and new residential quarters were built on the southern slopes of Mt Medvednica. In April 1941 the Germans invaded Yugoslavia and entered Zagreb without resistance. Ante Pavelić and the Ustaše Croatian Liberation Movement moved quickly to proclaim the establishment of the Independent State of Croatia (NDH; Nezavisna Država Hrvatska), with Zagreb as its capital. Although Pavelić ran his fascist state from Zagreb until 1944, he never enjoyed a great deal of support within the capital, which maintained support for Tito's Partisans.

In postwar Yugoslavia, Zagreb (to its chagrin) took second place to Belgrade but continued to expand. Zagreb was made the capital of Croatia in 1991, the same year that the country became independent.

Sights

As the oldest part of Zagreb, the Upper Town (Gornji Grad), which includes the neighbourhoods of Gradec and Kaptol, has landmark buildings and churches from the earlier centuries of Zagreb's history. The Lower Town (Donji Grad), which runs between the Upper Town and the train station, has the city's most interesting art museums and fine examples of 19th- and 20th-century architecture.

Upper Town

Museum of Broken Relationships MUSEUM (www.brokenrelationships.com; Čirilometodska 2; adult/concession 25/20KN; ☺ 9am-10.30pm) Explore mementos that remain after a relationship ends at Zagreb's quirkiest museum. The innovative exhibit toured the world until it settled here in its permanent home. On display are donations from around the globe, in a string of all-white rooms with vaulted ceilings and epoxy-resin floors.

Exhibits hit on a range of emotions, from a vinyl record that was played during a teenage breakup forty years ago to a stun gun that never got to be used. Check out the lovely adjacent store – the 'bad memories eraser' is a bestseller – and the cozy cafe with sidewalk tables. There are jazz nights on Thursdays during summer and fall.

Dolac Market MARKET (☺ 6.30am-3pm Mon-Fri, to 2pm Sat, to 1pm Sun) Zagreb's colourful fruit and vegetable market is just north of Trg Bana Jelačića. Traders from all over Croatia come to sell their products at this buzzing centre of activity. Dolac has been heaving since the 1930s, when the city authorities set up a market space on the 'border' between the Upper and Lower Towns.

The main part is on an elevated square; the street level has indoor stalls selling meat and dairy products and (a little further towards the square) flowers. The stalls at the northern end of the market are packed with locally produced honey, handmade ornaments and cheap food.

Cathedral of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary CATHEDRAL (Katedrala Marijina Uznešenja; Kaptol 31; ☺ 10am-5pm Mon-Sat, 1-5pm Sun) Kaptol Square is dominated by this cathedral, formerly known as St Stephen's. Its twin spires – seemingly permanently under repair – soar over the city. Although the cathedral's original Gothic structure has been transformed many times over, the sacristy still contains a cycle of frescoes dating from the 13th century. An earthquake in 1880 badly damaged the cathedral; reconstruction in a neo-Gothic style began around the turn of the 20th century.

Inside, don't miss the baroque marble altars, statues and pulpit, or the tomb of Cardinal Alojzije Stepinac by Ivan Meštrović.