



Zagreb

01 / POP 790,000

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Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Vinodol (p62)
- ➔ Mundaoka Street Food (p62)
- ➔ Zinfandel's (p62)
- ➔ Bistro 75 (p60)
- ➔ Mali Bar (p62)

Best Places to Sleep

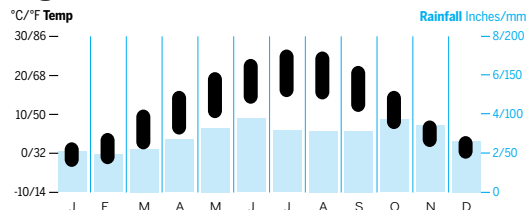
- ➔ Studio Kairos (p58)
- ➔ Esplanade Zagreb Hotel (p59)
- ➔ Swanky Mint Hostel (p59)
- ➔ Hotel Jägerhorn (p59)

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 recent 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 south-west to swim or sail, or dance the night away at lakeside discos, while in winter Zagrebians go skiing at Mt Medvednica (only a tram or bus ride away).

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 moved quickly to proclaim the establishment of the Independent State of Croatia (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.

Lower Town

Trg Bana Jelačića

SQUARE

Zagreb's main orientation point and its geographic heart is Trg Bana Jelačića – it's where most people arrange to meet up. If you enjoy people-watching, sit in one of the cafes and watch the tramloads of people getting out, greeting each other and dispersing among the newspaper- and flower-sellers.

The square's name comes from Ban Jelačić, the 19th-century *ban* (viceroy or governor) who led Croatian troops into an unsuccessful battle with Hungary in the hope of winning more autonomy for his people. The **equestrian statue** of Jelačić stood in the square from 1866 until 1947, when Tito ordered its removal because it was too closely linked with Croatian nationalism. Franjo Tuđman's government dug it up out of storage in 1990 and returned it to the square.

Archaeological Museum

MUSEUM

(Arheološki Muzej; ☎ 01-48 73 101; www.amz.hr; Trg Nikole Šubića Zrinskog 19; adult/concession/family 20/10/30KN; ☀ 10am-6pm Tue, Wed, Fri & Sat, to 8pm Thu, to 1pm Sun) The artefacts housed here stem from prehistoric times onwards. Among the most interesting are the **Vučedolska golubica** (Vučedol Dove), a 4000-year-old ceramic censer found near the town of Vukovar – the 'bird' has since become a symbol of Vukovar and peace. The courtyard has a collection of **Roman monuments** dating from the 5th to 4th centuries BC.

Also inside are some fascinating Egyptian mummies, with ambient sounds and light designed to provoke pondering. The collection of some 260,000 coins, medals and medallions is one of the most important in Europe.

Zrinjevac

SQUARE

Officially called Trg Nikole Šubića Zrinskog but lovingly known as Zrinjevac, this verdant square at the heart of the city has become a vital part of Zagreb. It's filled with stalls almost year round, and features festivals and events, be it summer or winter. Most are centred on the music pavilion (dating from 1891).

Zrinjevac is part of the Green Horseshoe, also known as Lenuci Horseshoe, a U-shaped series of seven city squares with parks.

Gallery of Modern Art

GALLERY

(Moderna Galerija; ☎ 01-60 41 040; www.modernagalerija.hr; Andrije Hebranga 1; adult/concession 40/20KN; ☀ 11am-7pm Tue-Fri, to 2pm Sat & Sun)