



THIS WEEK...

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Croatia's Adriatic Jewel Shines Again



Prime Minister Sanader on linking Croatia's North and South.

Prime Minister Ivo Sanader formally opened construction work on what will be the longest bridge in Croatia, connecting the southernmost Dubrovnik region with the rest of the country. (Page 2)

"Those who wish to see **heaven on earth** should come to **Dubrovnik**."

- *George Bernard Shaw*

"Celebrities like to come here [Hvar] because they're left alone. Bill Gates sails in on his yacht and no one pays any attention. No one cares. There are no paparazzi, no fans, no autographs. I was in a café with my daughter who said, 'Dad, that's the lady from 'Shakespeare in Love [Gwyneth Paltrow].'"

- *Steve Dougherty*

Croatia Fest
Sunday, October 2, 2005

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Croatian Comeback: Dubrovnik



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European Commission Confirms Croatia's Progress

BRUSSELS, Belgium, Nov 9 – The European Commission issued a 2005 Progress Report on Croatia, stating that the country has not had any serious problems in meeting political criteria for its membership in the European Union, and that this candidate country has a functioning market economy, which should be able to cope with competitive pressures and market forces within the Union in the medium term. According to the document, Croatia has made certain progress regarding commitments it must honor in order to become an EU member. The 121-page report on Croatia gives a detailed description of the relations between Croatia and the EU, and an analysis of the situation regarding the country's fulfillment of political and economic criteria for membership. It also assesses Croatia's ability to take over obligations stemming from membership, which refer to the ability of the country to adjust its legislation to the *acquis communautaire* and implement those changes. According to the key findings from the report, "Croatia can be regarded as a functioning market economy. It should be able to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the Union in the medium term, provided that it continues implementing its reform programs to remove remaining weaknesses."

For the EC Report on Croatia please visit:

<http://europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=MEMO/05/411&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

Croatian President Receives Honorary Doctorate of Science in Tuzla

TUZLA, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Nov 8 – The University of Tuzla has awarded an Honorary Doctorate of Science degree to Croatian President Stjepan Mesić. The Tuzla University Senate decided to award the honorary doctorate to President Mesić for the promotion of peace, tolerance and cooperation among people and states in Southeast and Central Europe, as well as for his "statesmanlike, diplomatic and highly moral, human attitude" and his special contribution to the development of the social thought and inter-university cooperation in the region. Expressing thanks for the award, Mesić said Tuzla was a multicultural, multi-confessional, multiethnic town which did not recognize intolerance or discrimination on any basis. The Croatian President advocated the further advancement of regional cooperation among former Yugoslav countries.

Prime Minister Sanader in Estonia

TALLINN, Estonia, Nov 8 – On his visit to Estonia Prime Minister Sanader met with his counterpart Andrus Ansip and President Arnold Ruutel. During the meetings, the Estonian Prime Minister stressed that Estonia would like to see Croatia in the EU as soon as possible and that Croatia is a role model for the countries in the region. He also said that Estonia will continue to fully support Croatia's integration with the EU and NATO and is very satisfied that Croatia's EU entry talks have been launched. Sanader pointed out that people in Croatia want a prosperous Europe for everyone, and expressed hope that Croatia would join the EU in the next two to three years.

Three International Trade Fairs Opened in Zagreb



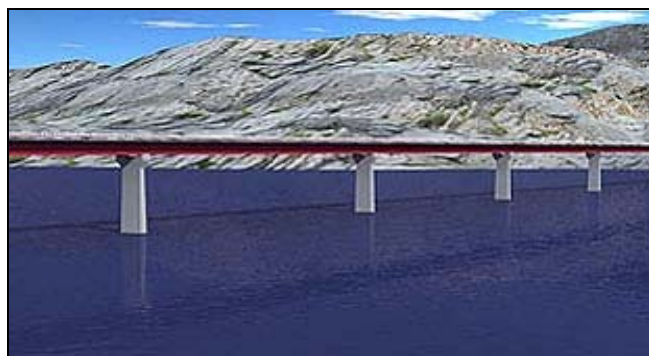
Minister of Science, Education and Sport Dragan Primorac speaks at the opening ceremony. [Photo: www.htnet.net]

ZAGREB, Croatia, Nov 8 – Three international specialized trade fairs INTERLIBER [Books and Teaching Appliances Fair], EDUCA Plus [Exhibition of Lifelong Learning and Human Resources Development] and INFO [Information Technology] are taking place in Zagreb. Croatia has chosen the path of knowledge, setting 2010 as the year by which it wants to become the most competitive country in the region in terms of knowledge, the Minister of Science, Education and Sport Dragan Primorac said at a ceremony opening the three trade fairs. Primorac said that one of the government's goals was to ensure that by 2007 every primary school child would be computer literate and with the knowledge of two foreign languages. He noted that investment in science had increased, adding that his ministry received 15 percent of funds from the national budget.

For more information about the trade fairs please visit:

http://www.zv.hr/sajmovi/index_en.html

Work Commences on Longest Bridge in Croatia



Artist's sketch of the Pelješac bridge, which is scheduled to be completed in 2008-09. [Photo: www.iskon.hr]

KOMARNA, Croatia, Nov 10 - Work has begun on the longest bridge in Croatia, linking the southern peninsula of Pelješac to the mainland. Speaking at the ceremony marking the start of "Project Pelješac" and the construction of the 1.4 mile bridge, Prime Minister Ivo Sanader said that the bridge, once completed, will fully integrate the southernmost part of Croatia into the country's transportation infrastructure, shortening the travel time for citizens traveling to or from the Dubrovnik region, while eliminating the need to cross the international border with Bosnia and Herzegovina. The project is being conducted in congruence with the construction of the Split-Dubrovnik highway, and both are scheduled to be completed by 2008-09.

CroatiaFest 2005 – “A Celebration of Croatian Culture and Folkways”



CroatiaFest, part of Seattle Center’s year-long series of international cultural events [Photo: Maria Plancich Kesovija]

SEATTLE, Washington, October 1 – Croatian communities throughout the State of Washington under the leadership of Alma Franulic Plancich, Executive Director of the Ethnic Heritage Council, came together again this year to produce CroatiaFest, part of Seattle Center’s Festál, a year-long series of world cultural events that honors the richness and diversity of the Pacific Northwest. CroatiaFest introduced the community at-large to the rich heritage of Croats who number approximately 50,000 in Western Washington. The event was opened by Dr. Frank Brozovich, Croatia’s Honorary Consul. The Croatian Embassy was represented by Sandra Štetić, cultural attaché, and Mario Škunca from political affairs. Special guests included Frank Chopp, Washington State Legislature Speaker of the House. Entertainment featured twelve Croatian musical and dance groups from Seattle and Vancouver, B.C., Canada, and a folk costume presentation. In addition to the performers on stage, on the Center House floor were exhibits detailing the history of the Croatian community in the state.

For more information about Croatia Fest 2005 please visit:
<http://www.croatiafest.org/2005/temp.html>

Washington State Community Celebrates 14th Anniversary of Croatian Statehood

RENTON, Washington, Oct 15 – The Croatian American community of the State of Washington celebrated the 14th anniversary of Croatian statehood in a gala dinner at the Renton Senior Center, a suburb of Seattle, WA. In his welcoming address, Honorary Croatian Consul Dr. Frank Brozovich commended Washington State Croatian Americans for their support of the Croatian people in their struggle for the independence and their commitment to the advancement of Croatia. Guests included U.S. Congressmen Jim McDermott and Dave Reichert, both members of the Croatian Congressional Caucus. Croatia’s Deputy Chief of Mission Marijan Gubić, representing Croatian Ambassador Neven Jurica, also spoke about the importance of continuing support of Croatian Americans in the economic development of Croatia, including investment, their talent and know-how.



Deputy Chief of Mission Marijan Gubić met with Washington Governor Christine Gregoire on Oct 17, 2005 to discuss discussing ways to promote greater exchanges of two-way trade, tourism, culture and education between Croatia and the State of Washington. [Photo: Weldon W. Wilson]



From left to right: President of the Croatian American Foundation Ante Vukov, Croatian Honorary Consul Dr. Frank Brozovich, Governor Christine O. Gregoire, Deputy Chief of Mission Marijan Gubić and Director of Foreign Relations and Protocol for Governor Gregoire Brent Heinemann. [Photo: Weldon W. Wilson]

New York Times: “Croatia at Peace”

Scenery matches newfound serenity along the Adriatic Dalmatian coast

ALAMEDA, California, Nov 7 - California bay area newspaper The Alameda Times-Star has published a lengthy New York Times article about tourism in Croatia, written by Steve Dougherty in July of this year. Entitled "Croatia, at Peace," the text describes the author's impressions of the country as he travels on the islands and along the coast. The text opens with the words, "You will cry when you see it. Bring tissues. You will need them."

"Nowhere is the tourist board's touted Magical Croatia brand more fitting than on Hvar, where they give names to the wind but not the streets, where children are said to fly and the richest man in the world has to wait for his latte during *ffjaka*, when the island tucks in for its afternoon siesta," observes Dougherty during his stay on the sunniest Adriatic island.

The author says that the Adriatic coast of Croatia has once again become a hot travel destination with "a rich diversity of attractions, accessibility and relative affordability as well as its stunning beaches and islands and magnificent food," calling Croatia's present situation a "surprising turnaround" from the war-torn early 1990's and noting that it was named the world's hottest travel destination by Lonely Planet travel guide, while appearing in numerous other magazines. The author recognizes that many foreign investors "see gold" in Croatia's tourist industry, and new or renovated hotels owned by Western firms stand as elegant monuments to the potential of the tourist industry here.



The picturesque town of Hvar lures travelers with its exquisite beaches and lavender-scented breezes. Here, the winds, but not the streets, have names. [Photo: Steve Dougherty]

For the full article, please visit:

http://travel2.nytimes.com/top/features/travel/destinations/europe/croatia/all_articles.html

http://www.insidebayarea.com/travel/ci_3191749

National Geographic Traveler: "Dubrovnik Renewed"



Concertgoers gather at the 15th century Rector's Palace where open-air performances are held in the atrium. With its romantic setting, it's the top venue in Dubrovnik. [Photo: Catherine Karnow]

NEW YORK, N.Y., Nov 1 - The craggy beauty of Croatia's coastline and tourism industry have in the past year been featured countless times in magazines and newspapers worldwide, and perhaps no other small city in Croatia - or the world, for that matter - has acquired a reputation that eclipses its own actual size, to the extent that this remarkable town has. We are referring to Dubrovnik, naturally, and so is

National Geographic Traveler in its Nov/Dec 2005 issue, noting that "Croatia's Adriatic jewel shines again with street life, cafes, and music." Raphael Kadushin provides useful information to visitors, from tips on where to find the best restaurants to shopping, nightlife and lodging in this vibrant walled city. Photographs by Catherine Karnow document the well-preserved beauty of Dubrovnik and its surroundings, and points of interest that proudly remind us of Croatia's age-old European cultural heritage.



Friends walk along the white limestone Placa. [Photo: Catherine Karnow]

For the full article and photographs of Dubrovnik please log on to:

<http://www.nationalgeographic/traveler.com>

News in Brief...

- Agriculture Minister Petar Čobanković said that efforts to prevent bird flu from spreading from wild birds to poultry had been successful. He reiterated Croatia was the first European state which managed to isolate the virus to wild birds, thus preventing it from spreading onto poultry and causing major damage to the economy.
- Two Croatian police officers, Kornelia Jakupec and Davor Javorski, were presented with United Nations awards for their work in the UN Mission in Kosovo.
- Representatives of the Croatian, Italian and Slovene governments signed in Portorož, Slovenia, an agreement on joint action in case of ecological disasters in the northern Adriatic.
- A consortium of Italian, Austrian and Turkish investors want to establish Zagreb as a major international truck cargo terminal. EUR 50 million would be poured into the project.
- The privatization of major public corporations, such as INA and T-com, is of interest not only to the Zagreb Stock Exchange [ZSE] but also the New York Stock Exchange [NYSE].

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