



THIS WEEK...

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USA Today: Keep Eye on Croatia in 2006



[Photo: Zoran Orlić]

Ljubičić Wins Another One



[Photo: www.espn.com]

New agreement between **Croatia** and **EUROPOL** improves and strengthens the possibilities to fight against serious organized crime and terrorism. The agreement between the two parties makes it possible to exchange strategic, technical and operational information including the transmission of data of a personal nature

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CROATIA ON U.S. TV!!!

On **Sunday, Jan. 15th** at **1 PM** the TV Station **MHz TV Networks** will be broadcasting the TV Documentary on Croatian Tourism **“Croatia – The Mediterranean as It Once Was”**, which includes interviews with the highest ranking Croatian public and private personalities, as well as outstanding illustrative images of the main tourist destinations of the country.

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President Mesić in Kazakstan

ZAGREB, Croatia, Jan. 11 – President Mesić attended the inauguration of President of Kazakstan Nursultan Nazarbayev on which occasion he held a number of bilateral meetings with Russian President Vladimir Putin and Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili, who also attended the ceremony. President Mesić said that his talks with President Putin focused on two outstanding issues between Croatia and Russia, notably the debt clearance scheme on which an agreement had been signed but has not yet been implemented yet, and the Družba Adria oil pipeline project. Both Presidents, Mesić and Putin, agreed that the debt clearance agreement was in the interests of both countries and that it should be implemented as soon as possible. Under the agreement, Russia should deliver to Croatia about 15 multi-purpose helicopters and Russian companies should build a third section of the Sisak thermal power plant and a Croatian connection to the gas pipeline network in Hungary. Mesić said that Družba Adria was an important project for both Croatia and Europe because they needed oil and gas. He stressed that the issue should be dealt with by the governments and institutions of Croatia and Russia.

Hungarian Foreign Minister Says His Country to Continue to Support Croatia on Path to EU



Croatian President Stjepan Mesić (right) with the Hungarian foreign Minister Ferenc Somogyi during his visit to Zagreb on Jan. 10, 2006 [Photo: www.predsjednik.hr]

ZAGREB, Croatia, Jan. 10 – Hungarian Foreign Minister Ferenc Somogyi was in Zagreb to discuss issues involving European and Euro-Atlantic associations with President Stjepan Mesić and Minister of Foreign Affairs and European Integration Kolinda Grabar-Kitarović.

During his visit to Croatia Ferenc Somogyi said that his country will continue to support Croatia on its path to the European Union and expressed Hungary's readiness to share its experience with Croatia from its negotiations with the EU. President Mesić stressed both countries had the same strategic objectives, adding that Croatia appreciated Hungary sharing its experience on the process of joining the Euro-Atlantic associations. Mesić and Somogyi stressed the two countries' good political and economic cooperation and expressed satisfaction with increased economic trade and a

large number of Hungarian tourists in Croatia. Speaking of the importance of national minorities in both countries, Mesić and Somogyi said both national minorities – the Hungarian in Croatia and the Croatian in Hungary – were well integrated and connected.

During her meeting with Foreign Minister Ferenc Somogyi, Croatian Minister of Foreign Affairs and European Integration Kolinda Grabar-Kitarović said that Croatia and Hungary are two friendly countries with no outstanding issues and expressed her satisfaction with the excellent level of bilateral co-operation. She mentioned that the two countries can serve as an example of good neighborly relations not only to the region, but globally. Minister Grabar-Kitarović thanked Minister Somogyi for Hungary's support and overall assistance to Croatia in its process of joining the Euro-Atlantic integration. Minister Grabar-Kitarović pointed out that Hungary is Croatia's important strategic partner in the field of economy, stressing the two countries' cooperation in transport, tourism, minority and environmental protection. Reviewing the forthcoming joint session of the Croatian and Hungarian governments to be held on Jan. 26th in Budapest to discuss the two countries' joint candidacy for the 2012 European Football Championship. Minister Grabar-Kitarović and Minister Somogyi pointed out that the joint session will contribute to the intensification of the existing bilateral relations between the two countries.



A logo of Croatia/Hungary bid to host 2012 European Football Championship

Note: The Organization of the **2012 European Football Championship** was initially contested for by five bids representing seven countries: **Croatia/Hungary** (joint bid), Greece, Italy, Poland/Ukraine (joint bid), and Turkey. On Nov. 8, 2005, UEFA's Executive Committee whittled the candidates down to a short list of three:

- Italy (11 Committee member votes)
- Croatia/Hungary (9 votes)
- Poland/Ukraine (7 votes)

The second phase of the bidding process will involve the submission of even more detailed dossiers by May 31, 2006, followed by UEFA site visits to the short-listed countries in September. The host will be chosen in Dec. 2006.

Croatia, EUROPOL Sign Agreement on Cooperation



Croatian Interior Minister Ivica Kirin (center) expresses satisfaction with signing a new agreement on operative and strategic cooperation between Croatia and EUROPOL. [Photo: www.htnet.hr]

VIENNA, Austria, Jan. 13 – The heads of the European Union Law Enforcement Organization (EUROPOL) and the Croatian Interior Ministry signed an agreement on operative and strategic cooperation between Croatia and EUROPOL at an informal meeting of ministers of justice and the interior from the EU member and candidate countries on Jan. 13, in Vienna. The agreement was signed by EUROPOL director Peter Ratzel and Croatia Interior Minister Ivica Kirin. The agreement is important for Croatia and EU member states because it regulates issues in the fight against organized crime, notably through the exchange of information and regular contacts between EUROPOL and Croatia at all levels, Minister Kirin said after the signing. He said the agreement was another step towards the country's integration with the EU.



To read about the agreement in the news, please visit: <http://www.europol.eu.int/index.asp?page=news&news=r060113.htm>

Croatia Investment Abroad EUR 1.6 Billion

ZAGREB, Croatia, Jan. 9 – In the first three quarters of 2005, Croatian companies invested EUR 95 million abroad, while Croatia's total direct investments abroad in the period between 1993 and late Sept. 2005 amounted to more than EUR 1.6 billion, according to the latest figures released by the Croatian National Bank. Almost half of the investments made by Croatian companies abroad in last year's first three quarters, namely 46.2 percent, referred to management activities of holding companies. Other investments abroad include a 14.3 percent share in the insurance industry, and maritime and coast transportation with 11 percent. A total of 18.1 percent of investments made in the first nine months of 2005 were made in Hungary, 17.5 percent in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 14.7 percent in the Netherlands, 12.1 percent in Serbia and Montenegro and 11.8 percent in Liberia.

Embassy Event - Croatian Embassy Hosts Miss D.C. "Send Off" Reception



Above on the picture from left to right: Vice Skračić, Minister Counselor of the Embassy of Croatia, Bill Hanbury, President of the Washington Convention & Tourism Corp., Shannon Schambeau, Miss D.C., Marijan Gubić, Deputy Chief of Mission of the Embassy of Croatia, and Bruce Pasternack, President & CEO of the Special Olympics International.

WASHINGTON, D.C. Jan 5 – The Embassy of the Republic of Croatia in Washington, D.C., in conjunction with the Miss District of Columbia Scholarship Organization hosted the official "Send Off" reception in honor of this year's Miss District of Columbia, Shannon Schambeau. Ms. Schambeau, a Magna Cum Laude graduate of Saint Leo University and a member of the Special Olympics Headquarters staff in Washington D.C., will represent the District of Columbia at the 85th Miss American Pageant. This year's Pageant, being held at the Aladin Resort and Casino in Las Vegas, will be broadcast live January 21, 2006 on Country Music Television (CMT).

Tricia Lloyd, President of the Miss D.C. Scholarship Organization, said of Ms. Schambeau, "Shannon is a great choice to represent the Nation's Capital at the Miss America Pageant this year. She brings a wealth of talent, dedication and compassion that every Miss America should possess. We wish Shannon the best of luck and look forward to her being crowned Miss America 2006."

Shannon Schambeau was crowned Miss D.C. 2005 on July 9, 2005 and was also the recipient of the Overall Talent Award, the Miss America Scholastic Award and was selected as "Miss Congeniality" by her fellow contestants. The Miss District of Columbia pageant is an official preliminary event of the Miss America Organization. The Miss America Organization is one of the nation's leading achievement programs and the world's largest provider of scholarship assistance for young women. Rich in history and social significance, the Miss America Organization is a not-for-profit organization that has maintained a tradition for many decades of empowering young women to achieve their personal and professional goals, while providing a forum in which to express their opinions, talent and intelligence. Last year, the Miss America Organization and its state and local organizations made available more than \$45 million in cash and scholarship assistance.

Pology Magazine: Croatia in Pictures

SAN FRANCISCO, California, Jan 1. - Pology Magazine is a new magazine dedicated to travel and world exploration that shares the exciting potential this world holds for everyone, regardless of their current station in life. The January issue of the magazine covers stories and photos on Tokyo and Atlantic City, plus a Chicago photo gallery. The non-urban information is also pleasing, particularly the Croatia gallery – photos of Croatia taken by Zoran Orlić. Here are some of the photos...



For photos of Croatia in Pology Magazine, go to:
<http://pology.com/photo/0611p3.html>



USA Today: Croatia among Six Destinations to Keep on Your Radar for 2006



Above is a picture of one of many beautiful *Brela* beaches. Forbes magazine ranked *Brela* beaches number six on its top twenty beaches of the world in 2004. (www.croatia.hr)

WASHINGTON, D.C., Jan. 11 - Croatia was chosen as one of top six “up-and-coming” destinations worth keeping on your travel radar as you begin to plan your vacations for 2006. Jessica Labrencis from USA Today said that Croatia began experiencing a boom in tourism in 2005, one that is likely to increase even more over the next few years. “Croatia is the latest country in Europe with *hidden gem* status (...) This Mediterranean country has plenty things to offer visitors from its capital city, Zagreb, to the islands scattered along the Dalmatian Coast, and the old city of Dubrovnik” observes Labrencis. Besides Croatia, other destinations to watch for 2006 are Albuquerque, China, Thailand, The Netherlands and Turkey.



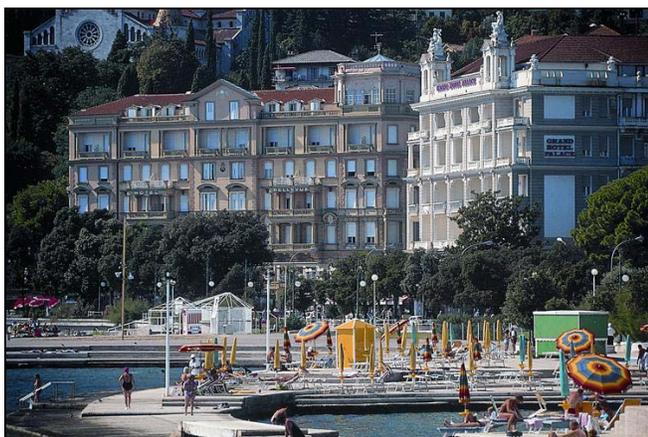
As you can see from the picture above Croatia attracts tourists with its beautiful beaches and clean and blue sea. [Photo: www.iskon.hr]

To read the full article from USA Today, please visit:
http://www.usatoday.com/travel/deals/inside/2006-01-10-inside-the-deals_x.htm



Upcoming Events - Croatia on the U.S. TV

WASHINGTON, D.C. Jan 15 - We would like to inform you that on **Sunday, Jan. 15th at 1 PM** MHZ Networks will be broadcasting the TV Documentary on Croatian Tourism “Croatia – The Mediterranean as It Once Was”, which includes a journalistic interview with Vjeko Martinko, owner and the Chief Executive Officer of *Lovranske Ville*. It will be broadcasted on the TV Station MHZ TV Networks. [Washington D.C. area: DirectTV – Ch. 56, Comcast – Ch. 17, RCN – Ch. 24]



Opatija, Croatian version of Monte Carlo, attracts many tourists from all over the world. [Photo: www.croatia.hr]

To look at the preview of “Croatia – the Mediterranean as It Once Was” on MHZ networks, please visit: <http://www.mhznetworks.org/programming/shows/1026>

To find out about the adequate carrier, go to: <http://www.mhznetworks.org/programming/carrier>



Villa Guerra, built 1906, is one of many beautiful houses that are part of *Lovranske Ville*. [Photo: www.lovranske-ville.com]

Note: *Lovranske Ville* will provide you with the best planned and best enjoyable entertainment programs and cultural tours to Istria and within the Kvarner bay. Besides various events, the company organizes different programs and excursions.

To find out more about *Lovranske Vile*, please visit: <http://www.lovranske-vile.com/english/default.asp>

Ljubičić Powers Past Moya to Win Chennai Open

MADRAS, India, Jan 8 – Croatian tennis star Ivan Ljubičić [currently world number 9] continued his magnificent form of last year by clinching the Chennai Open in Madras, India, with a straight sets win over two-time defending champion Carlos Moya. Ljubičić comes into 2006 off his best ever year when he helped Croatia win the Davis Cup.



Ivan Ljubičić has continued his winning run at the start of 2006. [Photo: AP]

To read CNN’s article about Ljubičić’s win, go to: <http://www.cnn.com/2006/SPORT/01/08/tennis.chennai/index.html>

News in Brief...

- Croatia will build 26 new fishing vessels and thoroughly reconstruct a further seven as a part of a model of financing the reconstruction and modernization of the country’s fishing fleet.
- The budget airline Wizz Air has announced the commencement of direct flights, starting at only EUR 15, between Zagreb and London. Operations should begin on March 27, 2006. In order to promote the new services, Wizz Air will be selling tickets for only EUR 5 that can be reserved in limited numbers until the end of January. The new service should help considerably to boost the number of tourists visiting Croatia from Great Britain, as well as improve business relations between the two countries.



For more information about the flights, please visit: http://news.cheapflights.co.uk/flights/2006/01/fIRST_lowcost_r.html

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