Fooling around Zagreb

Here’s your Zagreb invitation: come out and have fun. Because December in Zagreb makes you fall in love with the city. Glide across the ice-skating rink at Tomislav Square, dance at Jelačić Square, fool around at the Funicular, enjoy sausages and mulled wine... If you’re still short of ideas, the revamped Zagreb For You will sort you out. Check out the Advent map with best events and fun locations. And watch out for that snow ball!

ZAGREB
for YOU

Keep in touch! Download your free copy and share: zagreb4you.com

on Facebook
on Instagram
on Twitter

zagreb4you.com

Eagles of Death Metal, the band whose concert at Bataclan was interrupted by the terrorist attack, was actually scheduled to play in Zagreb on Dec 1. #ZagrebForParis

IN 2016, ZAGREB IS GETTING ITS FIRST PET CREMATORIUM AND CEMETERY. The cornerstone has been laid in Dumo vac, near the well-known animal rescue. @azilzagreb.com

FIRST MINUTE
Zagreb in a drop of coffee

Let your first impression of Zagreb be over a cup of coffee. Cozy up at Johann Franck, the revamped grand-style coffee house, smack at the Jelačić Square. This Bauhaus-style establishment, named after Croatia’s pioneer coffee roaster, excels in specialty coffee brews, with an almost museum-like touch of traditional cafe culture. Linger on for a classy lunch and delicious cake.

MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ARTS
Down the slide to artsy heights

Seven years ago, in the spot where Novi Zagreb residents planned to work garden lots, what popped up instead was the Museum of Contemporary Arts (MSU). A work of architect Igor Frančić, the meander-shaped Museum transformed the otherwise dull commuter city area. It showcases the works of Croatian and international artists, but also houses a library, multimedia lecture room, bookshop, VIP salon, cafe and a restaurant. There’s plenty to explore with sub-zero temperatures outside. When you get tired, forget the stairs and come down on the slide, an art installation by Carsten Holler.

TRADITIONAL ADVENT MARQUEE at Jelačić Square is no longer on. The Zagreb Mayor has decided against it, making more room for the New Year celebrations in the open air. adventzagreb.com

ONE IN TEN ZAGREB LOCALS USES INSTAGRAM. Each day there are 72,000 photos shared on Instagram, half of which are of Croatia, says the Jasno&Glasno market research agency. Use #InstAgram.

ZG IN THREE COLORS
Water fountains, MSU, cinemas and cafes showed support for Paris by displaying the French flag colors. Candles in front of the French em-
ZAGREB SUPERHEROES

Tesla in the heart of Zagreb

His only encounter with Zagreb was passing through town on his way to his mother’s funeral. At that occasion, he said at the City Council: ‘As a son of my home country Croatia, I think it my duty to help Zagreb.’ Tesla is omnipresent in Zagreb: find his inventions in the Technical Museum, or stroll down the shortest but most buoyant street bearing his name. Track down his statue in Preradovićeva street, work by Ivan Meštrović.

ANJA MUTIĆ

Author of Lonely Planet Croatia, writes for New York Magazine and The Washington Post. Follow her at @everthenomad

A winter’s night

I have a confession to make: I’m a Christmas Grinch. I’ll spare you the reasons why, and go on to my next confession: I’ve secretly fallen in love with holiday time in Zagreb. I love the nip in the air while you sip mulled wine and munch on sausages and bread at one of the many street fairs. I love the sea of people milling around the city streets, all in good spirits. I love the children’s laughter at the ice rink, the alfresco laughter at the ice rink, the alfresco... And then that first evening, the ground becomes covered with a soft quilt of snow. It all turns so silent you can almost hear your own footsteps. On that first day of snow, wait until evening. Then that very first evening, head out and stroll around Zagreb. For extra magic, pick a late evening, head out and stroll around until evening. Then that very first evening, head out and stroll around. The flakes start to fall, slowly, then faster, and faster, a nature’s crescendo... And then that first evening, the ground becomes covered with a soft quilt of snow. It all turns so silent you can almost hear your own footsteps. On that first day of snow, wait until evening. Then that very first evening, head out and stroll around Zagreb. For extra magic, pick a late evening. Pick any part of town, a random street. And then start to amble. Wander aimlessly. Make traces in the virgin snow. Pave under trees with trunks white and light, like intricate lacework.

Walk and walk, and you’ll discover another city than the one with all the colorful Christmas hubub. You’ll unearth another Zagreb, cloaked in mystery, an enchanted winter’s tale...

MONOVIE

Zagreb is a treasurebox of unusual spaces and buildings

SILENT MOVIE BLAST IN CINEMA EUROPE. Catch silent movie classics screened to the live performance of the Zagreb Philharmonic. If you’ve never seen Nosferatu, Battleship Potemkin or Chaplin’s The Kid and Keaton’s The General, get in line at Kino Europa Dec 22 and Jan 26. Tickets: 60KN and sell out quickly. @kineuropa.hr

BIOHAZARD: SUPERHEROES

Saša Šimpraga, writer and activist

COME OUT ON THE FIRST SNOWY NIGHT TO HEAR POETS PERFORM OUTDOORS

Traditional Zagreb New Year’s countdown takes place at the Jelačić Square with a live open-air concert. Croatian pop icon Nina Badrić and a host of popular Croatian bands will line up the show. It’s time to dance into the New Year! @adventzagreb.com

GRAND PARTY ON ICE

Lovers of ice-skating and Disney characters, hurry to Arena Centar Dec 10-13 for the silver celebration of Disney on Ice winter spectacle. Music and dance liven up the best-known fairytales – Frozen, the Lion King, Little Mermaid and Peter Pan – sweeping you away to a magical adventure. Tickets: 90-295KN, @eventim.hr

ZAGREB AND GDANSK ON CANVAS

GDAŃSK ON CANVAS

ZAGREB AND GDANSK ON CANVAS

The exhibition showcases the most important modernist building from the sixties: a housing estate in Lagingljina street with the ‘mobile’ facade designed by the architect Ivo Vitić. I also recommend visiting the city of Zagreb.

HIDDEN ZAGREB

Cult cafe tucked away behind the church

Every Zagreb local knows of Kinoteka – a one-time arthouse cinema and a name-sake cafe at the same address (Kordunska 1). This Hopper-style foyer operated only three hours before a film screenning, but stirred up enough buzz to grow into a cult artists’ hang-out. Though the screenings relocated to the Tuškanac Summer Cinema, to really “get” Zagreb... Go and see Zagreb’s most important modernist building from the sixties: a housing estate in Lagingljina street with the ‘mobile’ facade designed by the architect Ivo Vitić. I also recommend visiting Kinoteka – a one-time arthouse cinema and a name-sake cafe at the same address (Kordunska 1). This Hopper-style foyer operated only three hours before a film screenning, but stirred up enough buzz to grow into a cult artists’ hang-out. Though the screenings relocated to the Tuškanac Summer Cinema, to really “get” Zagreb... Go and see Zagreb’s most important modernist building from the sixties: a housing estate in Lagingljina street. And then take a stroll around the city streets, all in good spirits. I love the children’s laughter at the ice rink, the alfresco laughter at the ice rink, the alfresco... And then that first evening...
SLJEME The only European capital with a ski resort

Can't make up your mind on this winter's ski destination? If you're driving from Croatia in the direction of Austria or Italy, you'll be caught queuing at the border. Not so great so why not stay put this year? At merely 20 km from Zagreb, Sljeme has made it on the list of major skiing holidays. Stay in Tomislav or Snow Queen hotels, where lodging with breakfast comes at 160–420KN a night. There are five ski runs to match your level of proficiency. The easiest and longest is the White Descent (1101m), while the Red Descent will appeal to those seeking an adrenaline rush. You can reach both descents by ski lifts, which have a capacity to take 3300 skiers an hour.

Sljeme
5 ski runs
1100m White Descent
3300 skiers per hour

SLJEME makes a great ski resort provided there is snow around. A relatively low peak (1033m), at least in ski terms, Sljeme doesn't get more than 40cm of snow, but at least it's snow-covered during all three winter months. And when nature fails, fake snow technology saves the show. It was only in 2013 that unusually high temperatures prevented the famous ski cup – Snow Queen – from taking place. Need more incentive? It was on Sljeme slopes that the world-famous Ivica and Janica Kostelić took their first snow steps. They still visit today, especially for the New Year Eve Ski World Cup. Don't be surprised if they ski past you at one of the Sljeme descents.

 QuiZG

A day at the cinema

Catch Star Wars, the new James Bond and other blockbusters in Cinestar chains (Avenue Mall, Arena Centar and Branimir Centar). Cheapest tickets are on Wednesday (19,90KN). Midnight premiere screenings come at a highest price (37KN). Parking is free.

Art-house cinema
Cinephiles should visit Grč cinema (Jurišićeva 6), which screens independent movies and documentaries (closed Mon–Wed). Tickets only 15KN. Art-house movies are occasionally on at Metropolis, the screening room at the Museum of Contemporary Arts.

IMAX
If you're after action and adventure movies shown onimax screens, head to the Cinestar in Arena Centar (Lanište 32). Ticket price on Wednesdays 39KN and for a midnight show 60KN.

Cinema Europe

One of the last remaining old-style cinemas, Kino Europa (Varšavska 3) specializes in European movies. This is where you can catch this year's Oscar-nominated Zaidaer by Croatia's famous director Đalibor Matanić. Tickets 25KN.

MOVIE CLASSICS

Tukinac cinema screens Croatian as well as international movie classics, courtesy of the Croatian Film Association (Croatian Filmmoteque). The cinema showcases established as well as nascent film artists and symbolically changes only 10KN per a ticket.

Honestly, finish the year with a bang

December in Zagreb is like the finish of a long-haul race. We've paced ourselves throughout the year like savvy marathon runners. We've carefully distributed our strength like endurance riders. We've cut corners here and there. And now? It's time to go all out. But the last day of the year is not where the finish line is. Advent in Zagreb is. The whole month of sprinting into pleasure. You see the first glimpses of this December joy spree in the twinkling lights that beam up Zagreb streets and parks. Then Christmas market kiosks mushroom, exploding with jazzy handmade gifts and colorful knick-knacks. But this is still a warm-up to what's really important to Zagreb locals. To keep up with our Christmas spirit you need to get out, mingle and eat. Snag a sausage and mulled wine and move to the rhythm of street music. If you're worried about growing a muffin top, follow my friend's routine: diet before December to preempt the joy weight you'll gain later. You're allowed to train for Zagreb Advent this way! Tip: Never settle for less than three parties in December. Join the all-night Christmas Eve party at Kinotea, celebrate New Year at noon in Pižine and again at midnight in Zagreb.
Six months ago, a former professor of mine asked if I would co-teach a study-abroad university course with her in May 2016. I said yes. Teaching young travel journalists would be both fun and rewarding … for me, if not for them. But it was the professor’s second question that really got me excited: “Where would I like to teach it?” “Zagreb,” I said, without hesitation. Because my colleague trusts me, she accepted that my choice was valid. I did, however, have to justify the spot to academic administrators further up the food chain. I couldn’t, for instance, just say Zagreb was my favorite place to drink rakija and carouse. I am an adult after all. There needed to be real reasons for why the Croatian capital—of all the cities on the planet—was the proper choice to teach 20 university students how to be travel writers.

The reasons are the same ones any traveler should keep in mind when deciding their next vacation locale.

• Zagreb is a modern European capital with the warmth of a village.
• The city is easy to navigate—with excellent public transportation.
• Within a couple of days, you already have your favorite cafes and bars sorted and can find your rhythm.
• Scores of museums and galleries pepper the upper and lower parts of town.
• Zagreb is a quick bus or train ride from anywhere in Central Europe.
• The Croatian capital is relatively inexpensive, there are dozens of hostels, and the festival season never ends.

They say teleportation is science fiction. But the fine-dining restaurant Paradigma proves this wrong. One whiff of a pine-tree infused smoke in a dessert and you’ll travel to a Mediterranean forest. Already established at their Split home address, Paradigma breaks new ground as Zagreb’s first pop-up restaurant (Vlaška 55, until March 21). Choose between ‘Split’ or ‘Zagreb’ tasting menus and expect mind-blowing fusion of Mediterranean and continental food.

Lunch (4 courses): 290KN
Dinner (8 courses): 490KN
New Year double bill from noon to midnight

Fuzine, a charming mountain town at the heart of the Lush Gorski Kotar region celebrates New Year twice. At midnight, and more particularly - at noon! The town turns into an open-air party, showcasing live music and local delicacies. Don’t miss their famous frog legs, game stew and wild blueberry pie. Tip: Go for a walk around the nearby Lake Bajer and visit the attractive Vrelo cave.

Uber vs Taxi Zagreb taxis match Uber in service and price

In November, Uber came to Zagreb to stay. Regular taxi companies complained initially, even reported Uber to the traffic control, only to find out the revolutionary app taxi is completely legit. In the first two weeks, Uber attracted ten thousand happy customers, who hoped for even lower prices. Just slightly cheaper than the cheapest Cammeo taxi, Uber attracts with the overall experience, making sure that Zagreb forever keeps a great, and affordable, taxi service.

DISTANCE:
Novi Zagreb MSU - Train station

UBER: ride 29KN + call 2,50KN + 5 min wait
CAMMEO: ride 29 KN + call 2,50KN + 5 min wait
RADIO TAXI: ride 38KN + call 2,50KN + 5 min wait
EKO TAXI: ride 35KN + call 2,50KN + 5 min wait

WINE TIP
If you like white wine, try graševina, the most common Croatian white grape variety or Istrian malvazija. If red is your thing, go for plavac mali, especially great from the Dingač and Postup wine regions.

SMALL TAILOR REPAIRS
If you need small tailor repairs, pick one of two tailors (Mega-Cif or Cik Cak) in Prilaz Sestara Baković, the small passageway that connects Masarykova and Varšavska streets.

EXCHANGE RATES,
(BUY RATE, DECEMBER 1, 2015)
€ 1 = 7,62; $ 1 = 17,14; JPY 100 = 5,79

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The coolest, healthiest and most affordable transport in Zagreb!
displays the repainted bridge without the graffiti, the Hendrix project case against the Croatian Railway company. Though the 2013 post stamp years after Hendrix first appeared, adamant graffiti artists won their hallmark, even more so after resurfacing on the new coat of paint. Thirty against the Croatian Railway Hendrix wins the case...lady tidies up after every visitor. Black-and-white checker floor tiles – and the oldest running public toilet. It kept British Square Zagreb Parking denies it exists, but there actually is free parking in the center of Zagreb - in Pijanovacul-de-sac, near Kvaternik Square. It can take up to 50 cars, thanks to adamant residents who won their right to park for free in Zone 2. The oldest photo of ‘Hendrix’ is from 1994, though many remember the graffiti from much earlier. Hendrix wins the case against the Croatian Railway It’s official - the Green Railway Bridge is renamed into the Hendrix bridge. A work of Zagreb graffiti artists, Hendrix has become the Bridge’s hallmark, even more so after resurfacing on the new coat of paint. Thirty years after Hendrix first appeared, adamant graffiti artists won their case against the Croatian Railway company. Though the 2013 post stamp displays the repainted bridge without the graffiti, the Hendrix project attests to the vibrancy of Zagreb urban culture. Google Maps don’t show it. Zagreb Parking denies it exists, but there actually is free parking in the center of Zagreb - in Pijanovacul-de-sac, near Kvaternik Square. It can take up to 50 cars, thanks to adamant residents who won their right to park for free in Zone 2. There are 33,000 parking spaces in the wider center of Zagreb. TEND TO YOUR NEED TO PEE IN STYLE Clean and close by is what an ideal toilet should be. But some Zagreb toilets are more than private cubicles honoring a biological need. A century-old public ones, with original features intact, are as good as museums in revealing the city’s cultural life. Others are hidden away in museums, designed with such a touch to equal a work of art. Zagreb’s cafes and restaurants keep their restrooms clean, but they also keep up with the arty toilet trend. Museum of Arts and Crafts To honor the art and craft of ceramics, Zagreb’s architect Željko Kovačić designed a unique colorful toilet museum. Instead of ‘ladies’ and ‘gents’ signs, look for smiling painting faces. Botanical Garden An example of such unique Art Deco garden architecture and to house something as plain as a toilet! Go in even if you don’t have to go, and admire the glass and cast-iron decorations. TO PEE IN STYLE TEND TO YOUR NEED EAT YOUR WAY OUT OF A HANGOVER • Tapas at 1am - mix and match tuna, prosciutto or hummus at Mio Corazon (Radićeva 14). 7KN a piece. • Wok at 2am - pick at Asian fusion at Wok and Burger (Jelačić Square) where deals go for 10-15KN; open late on weekends. • Ćevapi at 3am - greasy and cheap, a late-night must-eat at Dolac market. • Pingvin sandwich bar at 4am - hurry to Brewdogs (Gađeva), a sports bar serving American fare; open till midnight on weekdays. • Steak after 2am - hurry to Brewdogs (Gađeva), a sports bar serving American fare; open till midnight on weekdays. • Steak after 2am - hurry to Brewdogs (Gađeva), a sports bar serving American fare; open till midnight on weekdays. • Steak after 2am - hurry to Brewdogs (Gađeva), a sports bar serving American fare; open till midnight on weekdays.
Advent weather

We are promised a mild winter, but that doesn’t say a lot, because Zagreb weather can change quickly. We can expect both rain and snow, cold and sunny days. Zagreb remembers winters as cold as -25°C and as warm as 23°C. On average it snows five days in December and six days in January. The probability for sunshine is 19%.

Average temperature for December/January

6.2°C/5.4°C
ADVENT CALENDAR
Four weekends in a row, four lesser-known Lower Town courtyards open their doors to the Christmas buzz.
Nov 28-29 - Obrtnički Prolaz
Dec 5-6 - Ilica 69
Dec 12-13 - Petrinjska 73
Dec 19-20 - Passage between Žerjavićeva 3 and Mihanovićeva 30/2 streets

ARTOMAT
Come and see artists create unconventional objects, enjoy inspirational workshops or just chill out in the lounge zone.
Dec 16-23, Home of Croatian Artists, Trg Žrtava Fašizma

ARTS AND CRAFTS FROM ZAGREB BALCONIES
Listen to unique classical music performed by Ad Gloriam brass ensemble. Dec 6 & 20 at 7pm; Croatian National Theater balcony, Dec 13, 27 & 7pm

CHRISTMAS OF OLD ZAGREB
Learn about old Christmas jewelry and postcards. Get into the mood with food, music and Christmas bubbles blowing. Dec 12–24, Klovčevi Dvori gallery

CHRISTMAS SWEETS FESTIVAL
Dessert masters present their Christmas selection of soft, crunchy and creamy handmade cakes and cookies. Come to eat or join a workshop. Dec 16–23, 10am-10pm, Karas Gallery, Práška 4

LIVE NATIVITY SCENE
Cenacolo Community of young formerly marginalized people revives the atmosphere of Jesus' birth, boasting gorgeous scenography. Dec 19-Jan 6, 4-7pm, 11am-7pm, in front of the Cathedral

NEW YEAR'S DAY CHANGE OF GUARD
Witness a special New Year’s Day changing of the guard, performed by the honorary company of the Kravat regiment. Jan 1; 11.40am-2pm

NEW YEAR CONCERT
Orchestra of traditional Croatian lutes lamburica plays waltz, polka and other festive dances at The Croatian National Theater. Jan 1; 7pm

STRAUSS IN OKTOGON
Peep into the pretty Oktogon passage, where The Strauss Ensemble plays waltzes, polkas and marches. Fridays Dec 4, 11, 18, 23; 6-7pm
Saturdays Dec 5, 12, 19, 24; 11am-noon

EVENTS

ADVENT ON JELAČIĆ SQUARE
Open-air stage with live music, cultural and art events. Nov 28-Dec 21; weekdays 6pm-9pm, weekends 11am-1pm and 6pm-9pm

ADVENT ON EUROPEAN SQUARE
Christmas market, food and beverages, music events in the evening. Nov 28-Jan 6

ADVENT AT ZRINJEVAC
Christmas fair in a magical park with the music pavilion. Festive music, unique handmade souvenirs and traditional Zagreb food. Nov 28–Jan 10; weekdays 6pm-10pm, weekends 11am-1pm & 8pm-10pm

ADVENT IN CROATIAN HISTORY MUSEUM
Learn about Croatia’s Christmas traditions from ancient times to the present day. The exhibition showcases old Christmas tree decorations kept at the Museum. Join a workshop to make your own decorations to take home. Nov 30–Dec 20

FULIRANJE (FOOLING AROUND)
Hip and relaxed Advent with art and food events. Nov 28–Jan 6
Tomićeva & Kurelčeva streets

ICE SCULPTURES
Watch live the making of amazing artwork made from blocks of ice using unusual tools. Dec 12z–24, Gradec plateau

ICE PARK
Glide away at Europe’s biggest open-air ice skating rink. Nov 28–Jan 10
King Tomislav Square

TRADITIONAL CHRISTMAS FAIR
Seasonal gifts made by local craftsmen, artists and manufacturers of traditional Croatian products. Nov 20–Jan 10
Streets surrounding Jelačić Square

ADVENT IN ZAGREB PHOTO ADVENTURE
Capture Zagreb at its most photo-ready and improve your photo skills with world-famous photographer Roman Martin. Nov 29–Jan 9, Tue-Sat 3pm.
info@konoko.hr. 250KN

FOODIE ADVENT TOUR
Learn from a renowned chef about traditional specialties Zagreb locals eat on Christmas and New Year. Tour includes a visit to Dolac market and cooking classes in a restaurant.
Info & booking: sonja@konoko.hr

ADVENT SIGHTSEEING TOUR
Walk through the old historical center with a licensed guide and learn about local Christmas customs. Daily throughout November and December, at noon
Info and booking: sonja@konoko.hr

Experience the magic of Advent in Zagreb