It’s time to kick off spring in Zagreb like never before – with lasers, holograms and 3D performances across the Upper Town and Tuškanac Park. We can’t think of a better way to start another season of open-air fun. Find the program of #festivaloflightszagreb on pg. 3.

Catch the sights, sounds, smells and tastes of spring from the Grič tunnel to Opatička street.

If a trip to Zagreb is your escape from a busy reality, it’s time to leave all your worries behind. Walk to the revamped Grič park in the Upper Town. This pretty oasis is a tribute to the city’s romantic Stross promenade. Explore the restored 14th-century fortifications or rest on one of the quaint benches. Rest up and then begin your sightseeing.

Sunshine in Zagreb 1889 hours per year 3,9 hours per day 5,8 hours in March/April

Check the time at Tkalča’s sundial

Zagreb has many public clocks but the only one that always tells the right time works without electricity or winding – though only when the sun is out! Find the sundial behind Marija Jurić Zagorka’s statue at Tkaličeva 25. It stands in place of the old Medveščak stream mill, today one of the city’s tiniest squares. The pentagon-shaped, rainbow-colored fan was painted as a graduate thesis project by art student Božidar Jušić. Believe it or not, the sundial was fixed to the wall with a mix of calx plaster and — cottage cheese.

Sunlight (svjetlo) light, licht, luz, lumière, luce, свет

First Minute

Mellow out in the new Grič park! If a trip to Zagreb is your escape from a busy reality, it’s time to leave all your worries behind. Walk to the revamped Grič park in the Upper Town. This pretty oasis is a tribute to the city’s romantic Stross promenade. Explore the restored 14th-century fortifications or rest on one of the quaint benches. Rest up and then begin your sightseeing.

Word

Svjetlo (sv - ye - tlo) light, licht, luz, lumière, luce, 光
ZAGREB SUPERHEROES

A ZAGREBIAN WHO GOES THE DISTANCE

Spring is near but one Zagrebian is still hibernating. After conquering the South Pole on foot, now he’s back home writing a book about his Antarctic trek. Davor Rostuhar went further than most Zagrebians: to the Arctic and the Amazon, to Egypt by bicycle, to Cape Town by motorbike, to Mount Blanc and the Himalayas… For seven years, he captured Croatia from above and showcased his photos at a unique exhibition powered by solar light. This fearless adventurer has done all this in only 35 years. Not much left for Davor to do but he’s probably thinking up something new.

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ANJA MUTIC

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

New landings

I have a crush on airports. I love them, for they mean movement, discovery, new horizons… In my 17+ years of professional travel, I’ve landed to settings of all stripes – from clearings in the Amazon rainforest and the ocean surface of Canada’s British Columbia to insanely short runways on Caribbean islands and through the Himalayan peaks to the legendary landing in Paro, Bhutan. Just like the thrill of touching down never gets old, neither does seeing a slick and shiny airport as a welcome.

My favorite was my go-to for coffee. I often find city airports too cold and functional, there is something beautifully organic about the new Zagreb terminal that seemed so provincial airport and seeing the hangar-like structure, its wavy roof, the curvy vibe and surface of Canada’s ocean. Just like the thrill of touching down never gets old, neither does seeing a slick and shiny airport as a welcome.

Come spring, what’s best to try in Zagreb?

When nature is abloom, it’s nice fresh or saltwater fish after all those heavy winter meals. Let some good to let our stomachs rest a bit, too – especially after all those heavy winter meals.

What is your restaurant’s biggest collection of cookbooks?

You keep Croatia’s biggest collection of cookbooks at the Museum of Gastronomy. In 1936. Davor Rostuhar

Zlatko Puntijar

Founder of the Museum of Gastronomy and head of Zagreb’s oldest traditional restaurant

In spring, it’s best to eat light and green

This year, your restaurant Stari Puntijar celebrates its 180 birthday. What traditional dishes do you serve?

We serve dishes from Count Nikola Zrinski’s cookbook (1662) and specialties from the New Combined Zagreb Cookbook, Croatia’s first printed cookbook by Kaptol priest Ivan Birling (1813). Dishes from historic cookbooks are important to both Zagreb and Croatia’s gastro-cultural heritage.


Another precious piece is Marx Rumpolt’s cookbook from 1581. He was the Mainz elector’s head chef. Meat dishes are popular in Zagreb yet you hold a fondness for vegetarian cuisine.

Though I’m not vegetarian, I highly appreciate the cuisine. If you enjoy stews and salads, you’re eating vegetarian and probably unaware of it. We prepare dishes without meat based on Stefani Bernas’ recipes from 1936.

Come spring, what’s best to try in Zagreb?

When nature is abloom, try eating vegetable stews. We know green color releases the eyes from exhaustion; it’s good to let our stomachs rest a bit, too – especially after all those heavy winter meals. Let some nice fresh or saltwater fish swim up to your table, like it used to even during the Zrinski era.

ZAGREB 2.0

Greetings from Zagreb: an app through time

Take a trip back in time with this Android app that shows you Zagreb from another perspective. Send a personalized old postcard to friends & family, and even peek into the lives of others from long ago by reading the backs of old postcards. Hop on a historic walk using the app, along a 10-location route through Zagreb’s landmark squares, streets and buildings. The nifty Now & Then feature has a slider that shows you how the city changed through years.
Let it shine: Zagreb’s Festival of Lights

The city that boasts Europe’s best winter event welcomes spring in style. Don’t miss four spectacular days of festival fun at about 20 different locations across the Upper Town and Tuškanac Park. The Festival of Lights starts on Thursday, March 15. #festivaloflightszagreb

1. **GRIĆ TUNNEL**
   Don’t miss the tunnel below the Upper Town lit up for an unforgettable welcome of spring – it’s the entrance to the Festival of Lights.

2. **ART PARK**
   The steep slope beneath the Strossmayer promenade uses light effects to take visitors back in time, when it was an old vineyard. Cheers!

3. **TOMIĆEVA STREET**
   Follow the glowing spheres through the most romantic route to the Upper Town, from Ilica to the funicular. Which staircase to take? Up to you!

4. **LOTRŠČAK TOWER**
   The cannon fire that regularly marks midday turns into a lighthouse, guiding the way to all the fun.

5. **A. G. MATOŠ**
   Zagreb’s favorite sculpture at Strossmayer promenade comes alive thanks to Croatian actors reciting the famous poet’s lines.

6. **VRANYCZANY PLATEAU**
   One of the most beautiful small parks in town presents an audio-visual installation based on an old folk tale about an egg in search of a better life.

7. **GRIĆ PARK**
   A lawn full of blooming tulips, lasers and 3D mapping on the facade of an Upper Town palace. Not to miss!

8. **GRADEC PLATEAU**
   The heart of the Festival of Lights: a flower symbolizing Zagreb’s magnolia floating over the Upper Town’s Gradec Plateau.

9. **KLOVIĆEVI DVORI GALLERY**
   Visit the alfresco gallery where thousands of light rays and background tunes celebrate the start of spring, 6-11pm

Festival of lights starts on March 15th and lasts until March 18th. Light show every evening 6-11pm
Step into Klovićevi Dvori Gallery and make your way through a thrilling laser-ray labyrinth. Try beating the lights!

6 - 11pm

11. JESUIT SQUARE
A warm, 3D mapping story about affection and love. 6.30pm, 7pm, 7.30pm, 8pm, 8.30pm, 9pm, 9.30pm, 10pm, 10.30pm

12. OPATIČKA STREET
The discreetly illuminated portals dotting the Festival's main street invite over for some fun.

13. CROATIAN INSTITUTE OF HISTORY
Every night of the Festival, see sunshine across the Croatian Institute of History building, coated in beautiful frescoes.

14. ZAGREB CITY MUSEUM
What’s a festival without its city museum? Light show surprise!

15. COURTWARD
Peek into a small courtyard at the end of Opatička street to witness a red rose blossoming like never before – a festival must.

16. VRAZ PROMENADE
The dark footpath connecting the Upper Town and Dubravka’s Path becomes a multicolor trip through the blooming forest. Walk on down to the colors and sounds of spring.

17. DUBRAVKA’S PATH
A magical playground for children and kids at heart. You can’t miss the main attraction – a caterpillar projected by light beams.

18. TUŠKANAC
Laser-dance extravaganza takes place in front of the open-air cinema. Go on, dance along with the Atomic Dance Factory crew! 6.45pm, 7.30pm, 8.15pm, 9pm, 9.45pm, 10.30pm

19. TUŠKANAC PARK
Tuškanac Park’s light pavilion leads visitors to a new location of the Festival – into the forest of the city center.

20. ANDREA PISAC
Zagrebačka antropologinja zanesena kreativnim pisanjem. Pratite je na @travelhonestly.com

Honesty, follow the Zagreb light

Intentional or not, some cities are built in a way to create a special form of art. This magic is not a single person’s expression, nor is it only a nature’s wonder. I am talking about a peculiar light that dances around Zagreb. Sometimes it shows up as a single piercing ray, at other times, it’s like a dome of mellow glow embracing the entire cityscape.

You won’t see this Zagreb light at all times. It’s quite ethereal so you’ll need to learn how to track it down. We, the locals, usually notice it in spring when it flashes through dark April skies that have just released a barrage of rain. When this sudden change of elements happens in late afternoon, city buildings glitter like rhinestones. Colors change from bright silvery to diffused amber, as dusk begins to set. This is when you need to be at the Strossmayer promenade.

As the weather warms up, the sun dons a deeper hue of red and purple. Zagreb sunsets are amazing because the city makes them such. Because several streets in Zagreb are laid-out in the east-west direction, you can easily follow the sun’s movement on its way down. It will look like a giant burning orange about to plunge into the sea of asphalt. This is when you should be on Ilica or Mihačevićeva streets.

Tip: To see how human-made and city-made light magic is created, don’t miss the unique Festival of Lights this March. For that, the Upper Town is the place to be.
**Arrive in style, with a stroll along verdant Zrinjevac**

If you arrive to Zagreb by train, your welcome won’t be short of royal. The first one to greet you will be (the statue of) King Tomislav. Head to the main Jelačić square and Zagreb unravels through the stretch of prettiest squares, parks and buildings. This is the way to the city’s heart: on foot and getting charmed by Zrinjevac’s centenary plane-trees.

- **Meteo Pillar**
  - With its original 1884 instruments still wound up manually, this vintage meteorological pillar will tell you everything you need to know about the weather in Zagreb.

- **Fountains and Lawns**
  - In summer, the best spots in Zagreb are by the 19th-century Twin Fountains that grace and cool the park. Put your feet up and lounge around on the grass nearby.

- **Music Pavilion**
  - Since it was built in 1891, the Music Pavilion in Zrinjevac has been the hub of culture in Zagreb. Promenade concerts, dancing in the open air or just strolling around – these are the traditions that connect the old-world Zagreb with its contemporary flair. Climb up and check out the acoustics.

- **Nobel Laureates’ Cabinet**
  - This unique tiny museum hides in the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts library – the cabinet of Lavoslav Ružička and Vladimir Prelog, two Croatian Nobel Prize winners for chemistry.

- **Croation Academy**
  - Named after the visionary bishop J. J. Strossmayer, this square features the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts – also his brainchild. Find the bishop’s statue behind the building or walk inside (it’s free) and check out the priceless Baščanska Ploča – the oldest monument of the Croatian language, carved in Glagolitic script.

- **Art Pavilion**
  - One of Croatia’s first prefabricated constructions, it was originally built for the 1896 Budapest Expo, then returned home. Today it features some of the leading retrospective exhibitions of fine arts.

- **Esplanade**
  - The luxe Esplanade hotel was built in 1925 as a layover lodging for the Orient Express train passengers. Since then it’s welcomed the most eclectic list of people.

- **Tomislav Square**
  - Stunning all year round, Tomislav Square beams up in wintertime when it features the fab Ice Park – the biggest open-air ice rink in this part of Europe. Gliding among 19th-century palaces is a fairy tale hard to beat.

- **Zrinjevac**

- **Tomislav**
  - The monumental statue of Tomislav, Croatia’s first king, is hard to miss. It was erected in 1927 to mark the millennial anniversary of his reign.

- **Rie**
  - Meet Rosie – the oldest tourist in town. This unique 2,500-years-old mummy resides in the Archeological Museum and has more than one secret up her sleeve.

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ZG POOLS: INDOOR SWIMMING SEASON

Hold on a bit longer for Zagreb’s beach season, starting in June. In the meantime, take a dip indoors. Four pools spread across town vary from small to Olympic-size, paired with wellness centers and everything else that comes with bathrobes and flip-flops. Eastbound to Jelkovec, visit Zagreb’s fifth swimming complex; the latest pool is under construction in Špansko. Working hours, prices and info online: @sportskiobjekti.hr

Zlevanka – a cake for all times

Look out for zlevanka, a traditional northern Croatian cake by our grandmothers. Its ingredients are modest and available year-round: corn flour or flour, eggs, fresh cheese and cream. As the name suggests (zlevanka – izlit, to pour out), the mixture is simply poured out into a baking pan. When the golden delicacy is done, it’s sliced into squares. With zlevanka, it’s love at first try – you just keep returning, whether it’s served sweet or savory, as breakfast, snack or dinner. Upgrade it with jam or spreads, walnuts or fruit, or serve with cold cuts. Always quick and easy, with gluten-free options, too!

The digital damsel behind an Insta hit

The beli.zagreb.grad Instagram profile is skyrocketing in followers – over 10,000 fans are looking for fresh views of Zagreb via #digitalnafrajla. Behind the pseudonym is Barbara Gržić, a Zagreb local originally from Knin. She seeks neither fame nor fortune – her hobby is capturing the city anew. #beli.zagreb.grad

UP FOR ROCK’N’ROLL? HEAD DOWN TO BEERTIJA

By day, an open-air memorial park of history’s greatest rockers – from Hendrix to Amy Winehouse; come night, an underground dance bar and club with food and drinks. Make your way down to Beertija at Zeleni Val, one of Zagreb’s coolest altie hotspots, open until 4am on weekends. Pick a night at @thebeertija.

They say the darkness of night can’t stop the morning light – and the January blues didn’t stop Zagreb’s tourist inflow. Compared to last year, there’s a 28% increase in visitors, so the city has already set high records for 2018. Where do all the tourists sleep? 2017 stats show that 44% stay in hotels (62 in total), 41% book private accommodation, while 14% opt for one of Zagreb’s 52 hostels.

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Dinaric Bakery
Zlevanka: 8KN

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