



Croatian Cultural Society
Wellington (Inc)
HRVATSKI DOM

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January (Siječanj) 2024 Newsletter

Recent Events

Ministerial Visit



On 7 December Dr Gordan Grlić Radman, the Croatian Minister of Foreign and European Affairs, along with his wife and his delegation, joined us for a brief, but very pleasant, meet and greet evening. Catered finger food and wine was provided and gifts were exchanged. We presented him with a beautiful hand painted plate made by our talented artist Emilia Hrstich and our Club received a book for our library.



His announcement that a Croatian Embassy is soon to be established here in Wellington was well received and we look forward to welcoming the new Croatian ambassadors to New Zealand in the coming months.

Upcoming Events

Save the Day for our Club Picnic



**Williams Park,
Days Bay, Sunday
18th February
2024.**

Language Café - Our Language Café is taking a break until **Saturday, 24th February 2024**

Special General Meeting Sunday, 25th February 2024 at 2 pm. Save the day for this important meeting to discuss the changes that are needed for our rules to meet the requirements of the Incorporated Societies Act 2022. More detailed information will be circulated mid February. Members are reminded that to attend this meeting and have the right to vote, their subscriptions must be fully paid up.

News

Slunj which is 25 km from the Plitvice Lakes and just 16 km away from the nearest border of Bosnia-Herzegovina was declared by the UN World Tourism Organisation to be the top rural destination out of 260 candidates from 60 countries around the world. Read more about it here <https://total-croatia-news.com/news/un-world-tourism-organisation-slunj/>

Archaeologists working to install a lift and restore the ground floor of Split City Museum have discovered ancient Roman Baths beneath the museum. They are in a well-preserved condition and include a pool, mosaic floors, ancient underfloor heating, an oil and grape press and a furnace. See more here <https://news.artnet.com/art-world/roman-baths-split-croatia-2406697?mibextid=xfxF2i>

Osijek is set to construct Croatia's largest hospital with a projected cost exceeding 715 million Euros, covering both construction and high-end equipment.



<https://www.croatiaweek.com/osijek-set-to-construct-croatias-largest-hospital/>

Siječanj u Hrvatskoj (January in Croatia)

By Maja Krtalić

Sretna 2024. (dvije tisuće dvadeset četvrta) godina!

New Year starts with the month of January (Siječanj). There are different explanations as to the origin of the word siječanj. A common explanation is linked to the word sjeći (to cut) and is associated with cutting wood at this time of the year but also with the winter and cold that 'cuts and bites'.

In Siječanj, the average daily temperatures range from 5°C to 10°C but in some areas, especially inland and in the mountains, temperatures can drop below freezing.

Siječanj is a month of New Year's resolutions (novogodišnje odluke) and articles in newspapers are all about how to survive January after the festivities and spending. January blues is known as siječanjska depresija.

Siječanj is a good time to reflect on the year behind us. Look out for the 'best of' lists in literature, film, music and sport that will appear in Croatian newspapers and news portals in January.

There is a public holiday on the 6th of January - Sveta tri kralja (Holy three kings – Three Kings Day is when the three kings or wise men visited the newly-born Jesus and present gifts to him) or Bogojavljenje (Epiphany - the revelation of Jesus as the Son of God to those outside Judaism).

School resumes in January after winter holidays.

Croatian Traditions in January

By Mary Begovich

Blagoslov obitelji (family blessing) traditionally, took place on Sveta tri kralja (Three Kings Day). The local priest, accompanied by three altar boys ringing bells to let villagers know they were on their way, visited homes and blessed them and the families living there. Now, in modern times with the growth in the country's population, it has become impossible to do this on the one day so the annual blessing takes place between St Stephen's Day and Three Kings Day. The altar boys called Zvezdari (starmen, named after the cardboard Bethlehem star that they carry with them) could now be choristers or just young parishioners and they may sing and be dressed as the Three Kings.

In old times, once the priest had sprinkled the home with Holy water, he would write a chalked pattern such as 20+C+M+B+22 above the main door to the home. The numbers are the year of the blessing - in this case, 2022. The letters are the initials of the three kings - Caspar, Melchior and Balthazar and also an abbreviation of the Latin for *May Christ bless this house*. Now, the chalk writing is mainly replaced with stickers accumulating on the door over the years.



Collection of stickers marking Blagoslov obitelji family blessing – these will be added to on Three Kings Day in Croatia
<https://total-croatia-news.com/news/made-in-croatia/bogojavljenje-epiphany-three-kings-day-in-croatia/>

It is customary for the full family to be gathered together for the priest's visit and it is traditional that the home is thoroughly cleaned, not just because the priest is coming, but to welcome Jesus into the home.

Bogojavljenje is one of the oldest Christian holidays on the Croatian Catholic calendar but, unlike here in New Zealand, it is a secular duration of Christmas and does not mark Croatians' end of Christmas, the day that trees are discarded and decorations are taken down. The priest is welcomed into the family Christmas setting when he visits - jaslice (nativity), candles, log fire, decorations and may be offered food and drink with the family. Christmas which begins in the evening of Christmas Eve, officially ends on the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord, celebrated on the Sunday after Bogojavljenje (Epiphany, Three Kings Day) so churches in Croatia and families that are very traditional can be seen displaying their decorations until then.

Nova Godina (New Year's Day) is celebrated within the family with an abundance of food similar to Christmas. Taking a swim in the Adriatic at noon on New Year's Day is a tradition in coastal cities and, in Opatija, one can expect to see the men taking part wearing Santa hats.



<https://nicicroatia.com/christmas-traditions-in-croatia-by-our-croatia-concierge/>

There are traditions, beliefs, superstitions, call them what you will, passed down through generations and still followed to this day in some regions, especially in rural areas, that told Croatians that whatever one did on New Year's Day, they would do that all year round. Consequently, the aim for example was/is, for adults and children, to be well behaved, honest, not work too hard or you'd be doing it all year, eat well, guard

money, avoid starting the year with debt, be happy and avoid quarrels.

In some parts of Croatia, there is the belief that some types of food bring particular fertility and rich harvest.



Croatian tradition says you would do best to eat pork on New Year's Day. If vegetarian then – lentils.
<https://navukic.com/2015/12/30/croatian-new-years-day-some-traditions-beliefs-and-superstitions/>

Pork is good as the pig digs the soil in forward motion-dig up heaps of good luck. Chicken is avoided as they scratch backwards with their feet so the coming year would be bad. Rabbits are also avoided as running forward they take good luck away from the home. Fish also shouldn't be eaten because all

prosperity floats/swims away from the house like the fish. Lentils symbolise coins so the more you eat, the more money you will have in the year. Making Krafne or Fritule is a must as, just as the cake rises, so too will fortune rise in the year ahead.

Rubbish shouldn't be removed from the house between Christmas and New Year's Day as luck might get out as well. Sweeping the home is not recommended as the souls of the family ancestors who may have visited the home and stayed there during the twelve days of Christmas could be disturbed. Sneezing before breakfast on New Year's Day is a good sign. The gender of new livestock will be the gender of the person who sneezed. Good luck is signified if the first person to walk into your home is a male but bad luck if it is a female. One would be healthy and wealthy all year if, on New Year's Day, they washed their face in clean water into which is placed and apple with a coin inside it.

Vincekovo This is an important winegrowers' tradition in Croatia and is celebrated on 22nd January, the day of St Vinko's death. Saint Vinko, a deacon and martyr from the time of Emperor Diocletian, is the patron saint of winegrowers and his memorial day has been celebrated in vineyards throughout Croatia for many years as the beginning of the new wine-growing year.

The vineyard is blessed, the first vines are cut from the cuttings, the reeds are watered with a drop of good wine, and smoked sausages, bacon and ribs are hung on the grape vines so that the new wine-growing year will be productive and fruitful. Winegrowers pray to their patron Saint Vinko for an even better harvest this year: to be healthy, sweet and strong, so the wine can water the thirsty, invigorate the tired, cheer the sad, rejuvenate the old, warm the ones that are cold, comfort the lonely and lift the ones in love; to protect their vineyard from winter, frost, rain, hail, disease, pests and anything else that can harm the vineyard. A branch of the vine with several buds is cut and taken home where its flowers will bloom in the warmth weather and small 'grapes' appear, according to which the winegrowers express what this year's harvest will be like. After the ceremony, visitors can, along with music and dancing, enjoy mulled wine, cooked sausages and bacon.



Sausages, ribs and bacon are hung and reeds watered with wine
<https://www.tasteofadriatic.com/post/merry-zagorci-celebrate-st-vincent-day>

For our readers who have internet access, here is a link to a lovely video on how Vincekovo is celebrated in Trema in the central Croatian town of Križevci. <https://youtu.be/xZcva6orFYy> <https://www.croatiaweek.com/croatian-traditions-on-vincekovo-celebrated-on-22-january/>

Things to do in January By Mary Begovich

Ski resorts in the Gorski Kotar region



<https://sofiaadventures.com/croatia-in-winter/>

Gorski Kotar is the mountainous region between Karlovac and Rijeka. Because 63% of its surface is forested, it is popularly called the green lungs of Croatia. You can ski at one of the many

resorts, or just relax and take in the beauty of this snow covered winter wonderland. Not a skier but want to be more active, then head to the area around Lokvarsko Lake which is not only gorgeous, but has plenty of hiking or snowshoeing opportunities. Lokvarsko Lake, about 30 km from Rijeka, is an artificial lake created from the former Lokvarka River in 1955 as a part of a hydropower system and it fits beautifully into the natural environment. It is 40 m deep and rich with fish such as chub, carp and trout. In 1973, the biggest trout in the world was caught here, weighing 25.4kg.

Enjoy viewing some of the beautiful castles



Varazdin Castle
<https://sofiaadventures.com/croatia-in-winter/>

The majority of the castles are in the northern Hrvatsko Zagorje region bordering Slovenia. They are even more beautiful when covered in snow in January. Two particularly beautiful castles are the Varazdin and Trakošćan.



Trakošćan Castle
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zeBFPACx8B0>

See the Icy Landscapes at Plitvice National Park



<https://sofiaadventures.com/croatia-in-winter/>

A visit here is well worth it any time of the year although it can be exceedingly crowded in the summer months. Winter visits can be quite magical

especially if the weather has been cold enough to make the many waterfalls freeze.

Shop for Souvenirs and Gifts - Souvenirs and gifts can be bought at local markets, directly from producers, museums, souvenir shops and stands, and online. Some suggestions:

Lavender Products - soaps, essential oils, satchels of dried lavender, fragrant pads for cars, lavender infused skincare products, lavender infused olive oil, lavender scented candles.

Wooden Toys - The Wooden Toys from the area of Hrvatsko Zagorje. There are several types of toys, such as wooden flutes – “žvegl”, “klepetaljke” – birds with wheels that clap wings when pushed on a stick, tamburitza, wooden animals, whistles, car models, trucks, trains, airplanes, childrens’ furniture for dolls and many other. The wood from local willow, maple, beech and lime trees is cut, dried, timbered and carved into toys by the men with traditional tools. The women then paint the toys using ecologically friendly paint in the

traditional colours of red, blue, white and yellow. The toys produced today are almost identical to those made more than a century ago and due to the handcrafted process, no two toys are exactly the same. The technique for traditional manufacturing of the toys that was developed by villagers along the pilgrimage route to the Marian shrine of Our Lady of the Snow in Marija Bistrica in Hrvatsko Zagorje has been handed down for generations.

In 2009, the art of making these toys was included in the UNESCO’s Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity and in the List of Protected Intangible Heritage of the Register of Cultural Property of the Republic of Croatia.



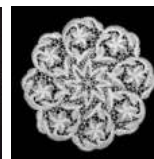
Traditional Croatian Lace - The craft of lacemaking in Croatia was inscribed in 2009 on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. Lacemaking came to Croatia when it was part of the Hapsburg Empire and there are three traditions of lacemaking to this day - Pag needle-point lace, Lepoglava bobbin lace and Aloe lace which is made only by the Benedictine nuns in Hvar from thin, white threads obtained from the core of fresh aloe leaves. Watch this very interesting video on the three traditions of lacemaking. https://ich.unesco.org/en/RL/lacemaking-in-croatia-00245?include=film_inc.php&id=01234&width=700&call=filem



<https://ich.unesco.org/en/RL/lacemaking-in-croatia-00245#:~:text=The%20process%20involves%20embellishing%20a,is%20sold%20at%20village%20fairs>



Pag Lace https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pag_lace



Lepoglava Lace <https://www.pinterest.nz/pin/435512226456511076/>



Aloe Lace <https://www.fmschmitt.com/travels/Croatia/Hvar/hvar/target159.html>

Šestine Umbrella - Šestine is a small village inside Zagreb and the umbrella is part of their folk costume. A local legend says that a long time ago, a young couple hid under a dark umbrella to shelter from the rain and their love was so strong that it turned the colour of their umbrella to red.



<https://www.pinterest.nz/pin/493073859217830951/>

Licitars—Colourfully decorated gingerbread cookies the history for which goes back as far as the 13th century. The art of making Licitars has been passed on through generations ever since, originally to men, but now to both men and women and the tradition of their production



<https://www.pinterest.nz/pin/321725967145415450/>

was included in the UNESCO's Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2010 (as Gingerbread craft from Northern Croatia). They are traditionally bright red and produced in various shapes and sizes like hearts, babies, birds, horseshoes, wreaths, horses, mushrooms and are the favourite Christmas tree ornament in Croatian homes. You can have your gift personalized.

Other gifts - a cravat (an early Croatian fashion statement), folk Instruments (tamburas or perhaps Croatian bagpipes) olive oil, Kraš chocolates, rakija, cheese, honey.

Membership

New Members (Novi Članovi)

We would like to welcome the following new members: **Rebecca Gaelic Lachlan Ewing Phil Guerin** and wish them a long and happy association with our Society.

Membership Renewal (Obnova članstva) 2023/2024

For those who haven't yet paid, the Committee reminds you that the subscriptions for 2023/2024 were due for payment on 1st May 2023 and, according to our Rule 16d.ii., as of 1st September 2023, are now well overdue. Payment of \$30 may be made via internet banking:

To: Croatian Cultural Society Wgtn Inc
 Bank A/c: 06-0561-0017339-30
 Payment Particulars: insert your initial and surname
 Reference: Subs 23/24
 If you wish to check your subscription status, contact secretary@croatianculturalsocietywgtm.co.nz

Bereavements/Osmrtnice

Our condolences are extended to the Ritossa family on the recent passing of John, their loved father, dida, husband of the late Graziella, and cousin of Maria Andriolić. Neka počiva u miru.

Radio



Tune into FM106.1 and listen to *From Croatia with Love* every Sunday from 12.30 pm to 1.00 pm. You can also log onto the Access Radio website <https://www.accessradio.org.nz/from-croatia-with-love.html> where you can hear our radio programme, and download it, at any time from anywhere in the world.

Language

Basic Croatian for Eating and Ordering Food

Can I see a menu please?Mogu li dobiti jelovnick?
 I'm a vegetarian.....Ja sam vegetarijanac
 How much is it? Koliko je to?
 Can I get the bill please?Mogu li dobiti račun?
 That was great!.....Sve je bilo odlično!
 BreakfastDoručak
 LunchRučak
 Dinner..... Večera
 Water..... Voda
 WineVino
 Cheers (good health)..... Živjeli
 Bon appetite..... Dobar tek or Prijatno

Did you know?

1. That Croatia's amphitheatre (Pula Arena) is almost identical to the Colosseum in Rome. While it is less famous, even though it is over 2,000 years old (having been built in the first century BCE), it is in better condition and is even more impressive and beautiful. Like the Colosseum, it was used to pit convicted criminals in battle against wild animals and gladiators used to fight there.
2. That Croatia has the highest number of UNESCO Intangible goods of any European country.
3. That Croatia has more than 2715 hours of sunshine every year, which is more than what Australia has.
4. That there is a modern art installation (The Sun Salutation) in Zadar, designed by Nikola Bašić. It is a 22m wide circle on the ground that collects light during the day and then lights up in neon colours through the night.



https://www.getyourguide.com/pula-arena-1104940/pula-arena-entrance-ticket-t389405/tracking_uid=3cb3a7df-f29d-493f-b5f7-9927a572e1bd



<https://adventurousmiriam.com/facts-about-croatia/>



Happy New Year

May the new year bring health, strength and prosperity

Stay in touch...

You can find us on

Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/CroClubWgtn>

Website www.croatianculturalsocietywgtm.co.nz or

email us on secretary@croatianculturalsocietywgtm.co.nz