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of the Adriatic Basin

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Interreg – IPA CBC

Croatia - Bosnia and Herzegovina - Montenegro

RiTour



Urban destinations on rivers of the Adriatic basin

riTour

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ABOUT THE PROJECT

The **RiTour** project – “Valorization of cultural and natural heritage through cross-border cooperation of urban tourist destinations on the Adriatic basin karst rivers” aims to diversify and promote the tourist offer of urban destinations (Blagaj in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Solin in Croatia, Podgorica in Montenegro) located along rivers of the Adriatic basin (the Buna, Jadro, Morača).

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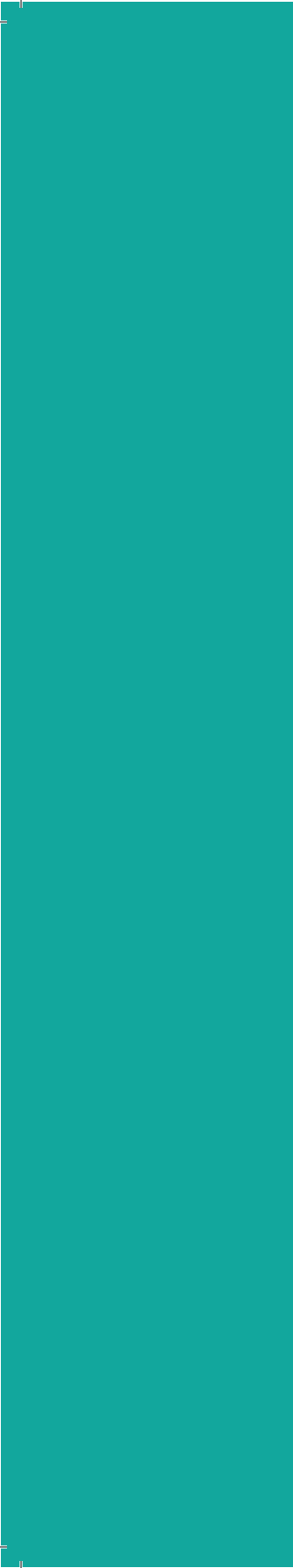


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Urban destinations on rivers of the Adriatic basin

INTRODUCTION

The RiTour project – “Valorization of cultural and natural heritage through cross-border cooperation of urban tourist destinations on the Adriatic basin karst rivers” aims to diversify and promote the tourist offer of urban destinations (Blagaj in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Solin in Croatia, Podgorica in Montenegro) located along rivers of the Adriatic basin (the Buna, Jadro, Morača). The aim of this project is cross-bordering of cultural heritage and the sustainable use of natural resources.

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Amphitheater in Salona

Solin

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

The area at the foot of Kozjak Mountain, which rises above modern Solin, has been inhabited since prehistoric times. These fertile lowlands were an early area of contact between Greek colonizers and the local Illyrian tribe called Dalmatae, at the point where the water-rich Jadro River, whose short stream never goes dry, flows into the sea in a tame bay. This is the site of the later town of Salona, which was named after the *Salon*, the ancient name of the Jadro River. Salona developed as the administrative seat of the Roman province of Dalmatia and flourished at

the end of the 3rd century, when the town was known as the *Felix*, or happy Salona. Following the Edict of Milan, Christianity flourished in Salona, as still evident in its preserved architectural heritage, starting from the cathedral complex comprising of two basilicas, a baptistery and a bishop's palace. The town was already in decline when it was conquered and destroyed by the Avars around 640 CE. Its people took refuge in the nearby palace of Emperor Diocletian, which later developed into Split, and nearby islands. The town has never been rebuilt within its former scope and never reached



the same significance; Croats settled in the area and occupied the outskirts of the ancient town of Salona, forming a coexistence with the remaining natives.

Several Croatian rulers from the 9th to the 11th century had ties with Solin: Duke Trpimir rebuilt the monastery in Rižinice; Queen Jelena erected two churches on Our Lady's Island; and King Zvonimir was crowned in the Church of St. Peter and Moses.

At the end of the 11th century, the mainstay of Croatian rulers was transferred from Solin to Knin, and Solin lost its former metropolitan importance. Around Solin, conflicts arose between local noblemen and the Venetians; the area was later conquered by the Turks. The Jadro River in Solin, often called just *Rika* (River), formed a natural boundary between the Split and Klis regions, and when the Turks occupied Klis in 1537, the river becomes the border between the Turkish Empire and the Venetian Republic. After the liberation from the Turks in the 17th century, the Venetians populated the devastated area of Solin with people from Drniš. New inhabitants built their hamlets on the edges of the ancient town and kept up their traditional occupations, farming and cattle breeding; they shared the fate of the broader Dalmatia area and had to survive periods of French and Austrian rule. In the early 20th century, early industrialization took over the Solin area, primarily based around local marl mines. Newly opened marlstone quarries and the developing cement industry would irreversibly alter the idyllic landscape of the Solin basin. By the end of the 20th century, Solin had predominantly developed as the industrial suburb of Split. After the founding of the Croatian republic, Solin acquired the status of a town and the outdated industry gave

way to the valorization of its cultural and historical values, which have increasingly become the source of development and prosperity of the town.

SITE DESCRIPTION AND TOURIST CONTENT

The town of Solin, with its young population and dynamic lifestyle and working, is basically part of the wider Split urban area, with which it is physically connected. The uniqueness and identity of Solin stem from the archeological site of the ancient town of Salona, its early Croatian monuments, and the hundred-year-old cement industry; of natural beauties, there is the short but water-rich Jadro River with its endemic fish species – the Solin softmouth trout.

Salona, a large Roman town, the center of the province and the seat of the archbishop, has been preserved to this day as an impressive archeological site, owing to the fact that no new settlement has ever been built on top of it, since even the present-day Solin developed to the east of the ancient Salona. Despite many years of systematic archaeological research, only a small part of the former ancient town has been restored and is open for visitors; but what is there is still impressive. The most significant buildings at the archeological site include: in the northwest, an amphitheater built in the second half of the 2nd century, with room for around fifteen thousand spectators. The first Christian oratory complex was built along the western town walls, next to the *basilica urbana* or the town basilica; there is also a baptistery, a bishop's residence, atriums and lobbies. The *spas*, or the town baths, were built to the east of the basilica. A *theater* was erected in the southern part

of the town in mid-1st century. The elliptical town center was surrounded by town walls, which had been built over several centuries. The northern and western town walls are the best preserved today. Outside of the town walls, the Kapljuč site contains the oldest Salonian basilica, the *Basilica of the Five Martyrs*, with an adjacent cemetery that was in use from the 1st–4th century. The Manastirine site with a cemetery is located to the north of the town walls; the site is of particular importance for the history of the Church, since it is the burial site of the Solin bishop and martyr Domnius or Dujam, the patron saint of Split. Manastirine is home to the Tusculum Museum, built in 1894, on the occasion of the First Congress of Ancient Christian Archeology in Solin and Split. The Tusculum is still the center of expert and scientific archeological research. To

the same significance even in ancient times. The Salona aqueduct was built in the 1st century; another aqueduct was built at the end of the 3rd century, to transfer water from the source to the Emperor Diocletian Palace, or the present-day Split. Diocletian's aqueduct still exists as a first-class historical monument, and a significant part of has been in operation since its reconstruction in the 19th century. Croats who migrated here in the Middle Ages adjusted to their new environment and embraced civilizational advances and Christianity while preserving their language and identity. In the immediate vicinity of the ruins of the ancient Salona, they built their own buildings and organized their lifestyles and events, lending to the Jadro River its honorable title of the “*Croatian Jordan*”. There are sites of the greatest importance

Salona, a large Roman town, the center of the province and the seat of the archbishop, has been preserved to this day as an impressive archeological site

the north of the amphitheater we find Marusinac, a Salonian burial complex with two basilicas, a mausoleum and the burial site of Anastasius of Aquileia, who was executed during one of Diocletian's persecutions. The archeological significance of Salona makes this site a must-see stop for anyone, even a casual passerby through the area; the site is maintained by the Split Archeological Museum, which also offers expert guided tours.

The abundant source of the Jadro River is of utmost importance for the water supply not only to Split but also to the entire Solin and Kaštela basin, with its hundreds of thousands of inhabitants. The source had

for the early Croatian state along the Jadro River. King Dmitar Zvonimir was crowned in the Church of St. Peter and Moses, an 11th-century early Romanesque building whose remains lie right next to the river, which had been built within the perimeter of a larger, early-Christian 6th-century church, known to the locals as “*The Hollow Church*”. Our Lady's Island, located in the very heart of the town, harbors the shrine of Our Lady of the Island, a Marian shrine of national importance, where the Nativity of Mary is especially venerated. At this site, in the second half of the 10th century, Queen Jelena, a folk favorite and a “*patroness of widows and orphans*”, erected two churches, which served as the royal tomb and the crowning



Our Lady's Island in Solin

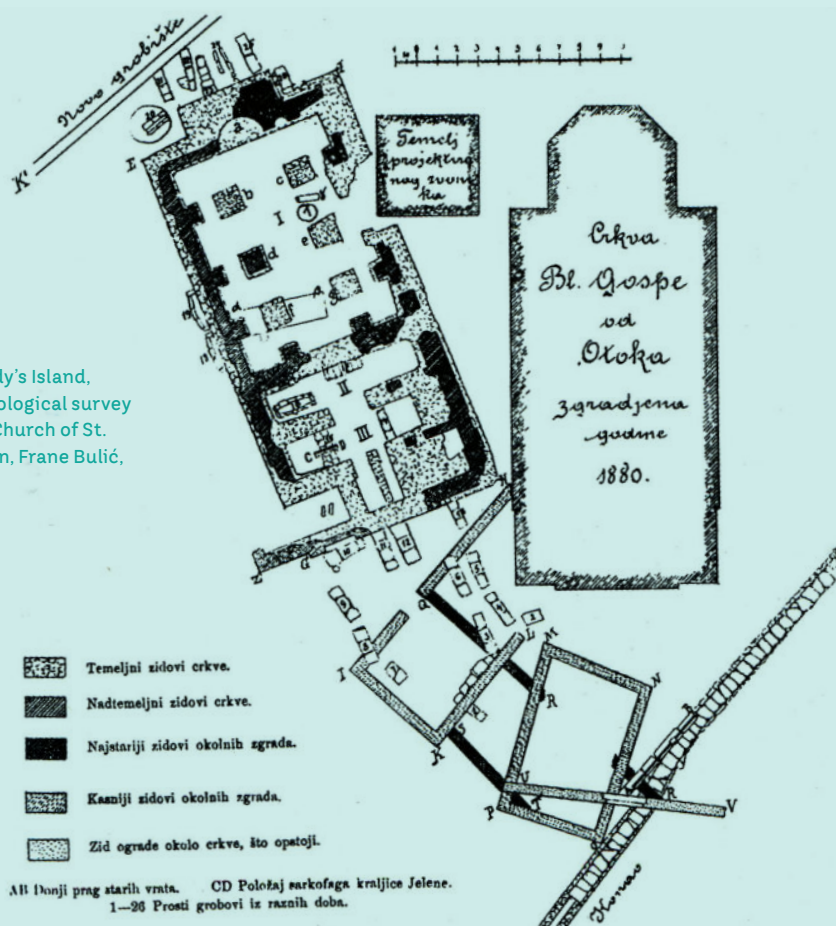
basilica. Although these churches are today preserved only in the archaeological layer and are not represented, their significance for the early Croatian state is exceptional.

The Great Meadow on Our Lady's Island was the site of a more recent historical event, the 1998 youth meeting with Pope John Paul II.

The source of the Jadro River is an important habitat of an endemic trout species, the Solin softmouth trout (*Salmo obtusirostris salonitana*); in 1984, the upper course of the Jadro River was protected as an ichthyological reserve. The Reserve should in the near future develop new content for visitors who want to learn more about the

Solin trout and get a broader experience. Solin is a good place for recreation and outdoor activities, offering organized tours of cultural heritage, and the option to visit sites such as the renovated Gašpina Mill with ethnographic treasures or the Parać House with a food workshop for tourists. Solin offers opportunities for an active holiday: from long walks along the Jadro River and through the landscaped area of Our Lady's Island, to jogging, cycling and other recreational sports. Mountaineers who head for the Solin hiking trail, which stretches along the slopes of Kozjak and Mosor, can get to know Solin and its surroundings, and visitors looking for a shot of adrenaline can try the Kozjak-Split zipline or play a paintball match.

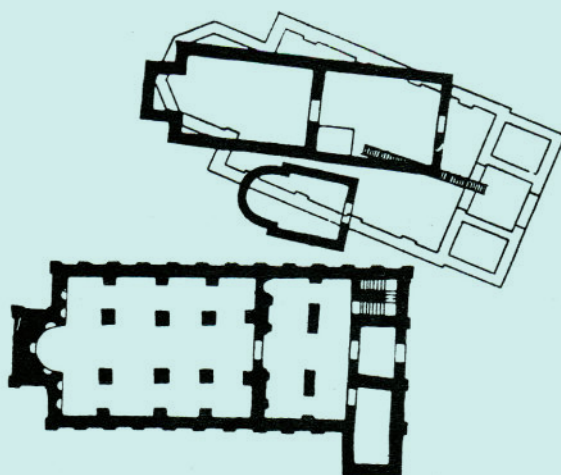
Our Lady's Island,
archaeological survey
of the Church of St.
Stephen, Frane Bulić,
1898



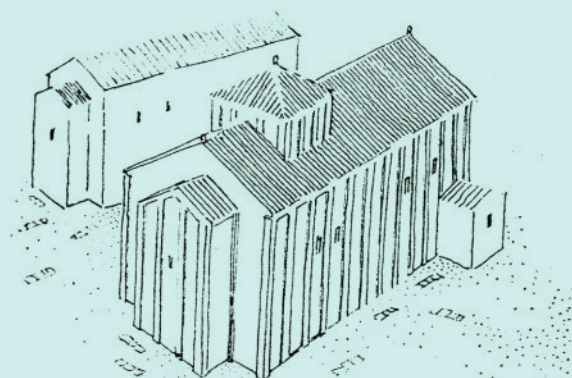
SOLIN CULTURAL HERITAGE

The cultural heritage of Solin is extremely rich, and we especially emphasize the archeological site of the town of Salona, the old center of the ancient Province of Dalmatia, located to the west of the present administrative center of Solin, which is a

significant tourist attraction that has been marked on the cultural map of Croatia. The area of the ancient Salona is the theme of a separate future research, restoration and exhibition program at this archeological site, which will apply for the European Funds funding; all necessary documentation for future interventions were prepared in



Rekonstrukcija bazilika
na Otoku, Ejnar Dyggve



2019. Solin is also the medieval center of the Croatian state: Our Lady's Island as well as the area along the riverbank, with its churches and archeological sites, is crucial for our national history.

Localities that are directly related to the Jadro River and represent cultural

heritage of local and national importance were marked separately in the overview of cultural assets of Solin.

OUR LADY'S ISLAND

The Jadro River, which has changed its course through the history and used to flow

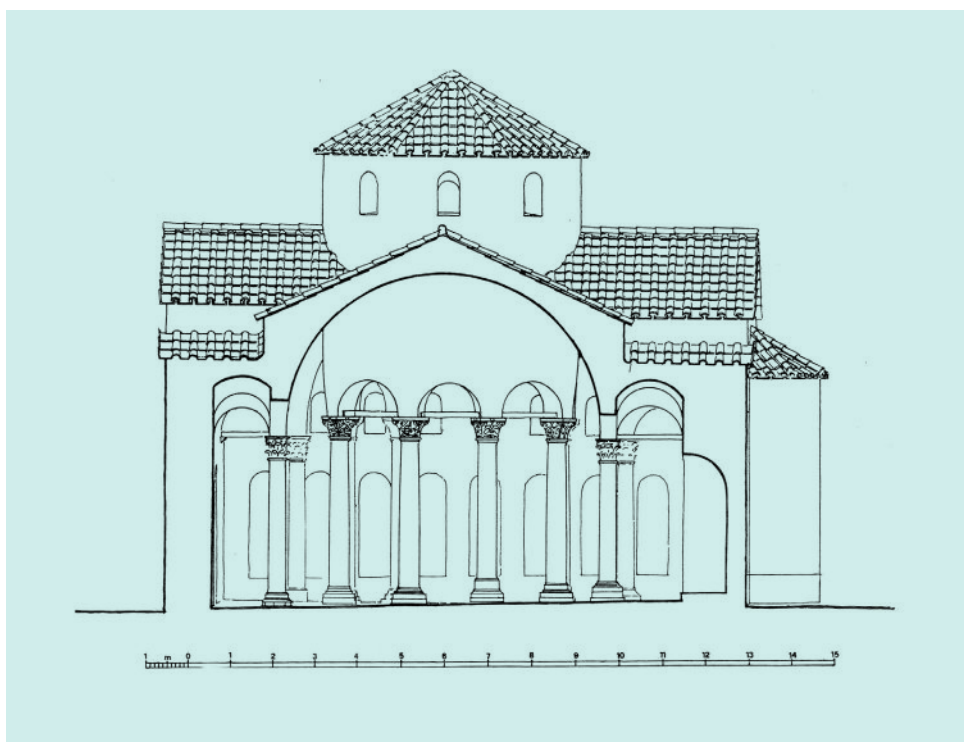


Gradina, from the air

into the sea one kilometer upstream than it does today, formed a delta with thirteen islands. The largest of these is Our Lady's Island. In ancient times, the island was on the trade routes between Trogir (*Tragurion*) in the west and Split (*Aspalathos*) in the east, and an ancient necropolis formed along the road. A *villa rustica* of some wealthier Salonian family was also built on the island. The Old Croatian period is the most significant for the history of Our Lady's Island. Upon their arrival to these parts, Croats settled on the outskirts of the devastated and abandoned Salona. The island attracted Croatian rulers primarily due to the economic importance of the river on which they built their mills. In the second half of the 10th century, Queen Jelena

built two churches on Our Lady's Island, one dedicated to Our Lady and the other St. Stephen. Queen Jelena died in 976 and her sarcophagus was laid in the atrium of the Church of St. Stephen. Her son Stjepan Držislav was allegedly crowned in the same church. Both churches existed on the Island until 1397. It is assumed that the churches were destroyed in long-lasting ravages after 1537, when the Ottomans took over Klis and then Solin. After the liberation of the area after the Candian War in the mid-17th century, there was only one smaller Church of St. Mary left on Our Lady's Island.

Archaeological sites on the Island to the north of the present-day church have confirmed the existence of a triple-nave church of St.



The Church in Gradina, presumed original appearance by Jerko Marasović

Stephen well as the remains of Queen Jelena's sarcophagus. Archaeological research within the present-day church found the remains of an earlier church, attributed to the second church built by Queen Jelena, and dedicated to Our Lady. These archeological studies have not been systematic and comprehensive, so there is still some debate as to whether these are medieval churches, and if one of them could be an Old Croatian church, based on stone sculptures unearthed there. Other researchers consider it to be a single church, claiming that a church the size of the modern one was built much later.

Today's Church of Our Lady of the Island, built in 1875 and designed by architect Emil

Vecchiotti, contains an early Christian stone sculpture that is used as a baptistery and an ambon, and the altar stone is laid on top of a Corinthian capital from Salona.

GRADINA

The Gradina Memorial Complex was built on the right bank of the Jadro River, along the eastern wall of the ancient town. The complex consists of the remains of a medieval fortress and a Turkish-period fortress, containing archaeological remains of a church from the time of the Byzantine Emperor Justinian (527–56). The church has a rectangular floor plan with three apses and was dedicated to the Holy Mother, who was worshiped in Salona. It was



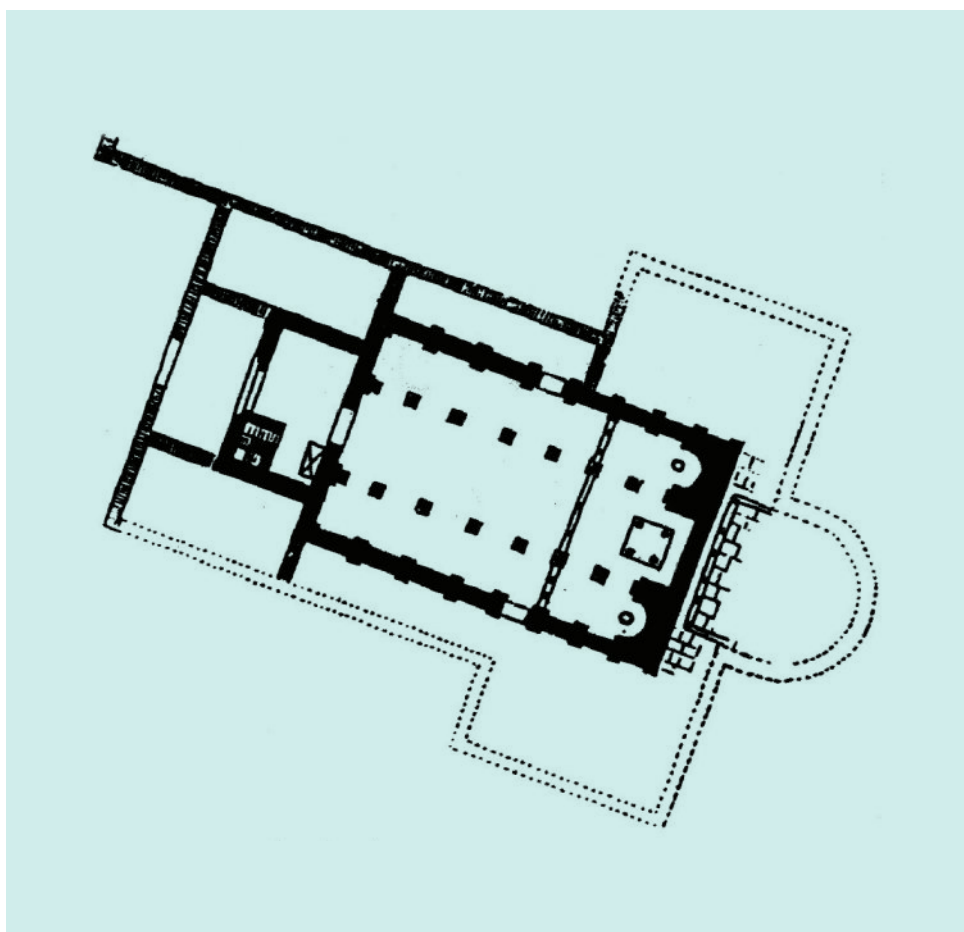
Hollow Church

restored in 10th–11th century and equipped with a rectangular *nartex* and furnished with Old Croatian stone furniture. The medieval fort might have been built around the church, and it is assumed that the fort was built by the Split Archbishop Ugolino de Mala Branca (1349–1888) to protect his possessions from being pilfered by the Šubić family, the then lords of Klis. The fortress had a trapezoidal floor plan and towers at its corners. During the Cretan War (1645–1669), the Turks built the present-day fortress on the site, partly on top

of the eastern wall of Salona, to enable them to easily besiege the Klis fortress.

CHURCH OF ST. PETER AND MOSES IN THE HOLLOW CHURCH

To the northeast of Our Lady's Island and upstream along the river we find ruins of churches that have been locally known as the *Hollow Church* for more than a few centuries. The decrepit triple-nave basilica of St. Peter and Moses was given this picturesque name



Hollow Church, floor plan, Ejnar Dyggve

by new settlers of Solin at the turn of the 17th and 18th centuries. An early Romanesque church dating from the 11th century, which was built inside the great early Christian basilica from the 6th century, is thought to be the site of the coronation of Ban Zvonimir as the King of Croatia in 1076. In addition to the church, there was a Benedictine monastery, apparently linked to the ruling house, which may possibly explain the choice of this location for the construction of the coronation church. The course of the Jadro River has changed

significantly over time, the surrounding terrain has risen, and a road leading to Majdan has been built to the north of the church. Due to the changing course of the river, the site is exposed to frequent flooding, and the remains of the walls of the early Christian church are still preserved today under a fence separating the archaeological site from the local road.

The triple-nave Early Romanesque basilica had a *westwerk* (a western facade with a bell tower and galleries) in the west and three



Gašpina Mill

enclosed apses in the east. There was a large architrave with an inscription listing the titulars of the Church of St. Peter and Moses. The plutei now built into the baptismal font of the Split baptistery of St. John, formerly the Little Temple, seem to have come from this architrave. Among the plutei, the most famous is the one commonly interpreted as depicting a Croatian ruler on the throne, likely King Zvonimir. In addition to its archeological significance, the Church of St. Peter and Moses has an exceptional historical value for the period of the early Croatian state.

THE JADRO RIVER AND MILLS

The river of Solin, which springs at the foot of the cliffs of Mosor, had for centuries been bringing life to this area with relatively scarce

water. The river rich in water that would not dry up even in the summer months was suitable for building mills, which constituted a significant activity and an important source of income in the past. Cereals were brought to the mills by the inhabitants of the surrounding islands of Brač, Šolta, Čiovo and even Korčula, and grain was also grinded by the inhabitants of the surrounding areas, as the Žrnovnica River would dry up during summer, and the mill on Pantan near Trogir was not sufficient to grind all Trogir grain.

During the Croatian people's dynasty, building mills and collecting income was a royal privilege. The mills of Solin were first mentioned in documents around 1000 AD. The first reliable information about the mills of Solin pertains to Petar Krešimir's deed



Four mills of Solin have been preserved to this day: the Aljinović Mill, Big Galija, Small Galija, the Small Gabrić and Gašpina Mill, which has recently been completely renovated.

of donation from 1069 AD, by which space for a mill on the river of Solin was granted to the monastery of St. Stephen *de pinis*. The mill was built in the middle stretch of the Jadro River, just east of the church of St. Peter and Moses.

The importance of mills for everyday life is evident from the document from 1076-1078 AD, by which King Zvonimir donated a land in Lažane along with a mill "*which is our life*" to the monastery of St. Benedict in Split. The location of mills on rivers in the old Croatian period cannot be precisely determined, as

early mills were wooden buildings with only 1-2 mill wheels.

When the Ottomans conquered Klis in 1537, the mills fell into their hands. A mill was also owned by the widow of Rüstem Pasha, and it had 12 mill wheels. Only later were stone mills with a higher number of mill wheels built. Historical documents mention a high number of mills, and most of them were located near Our Lady of the Island, as that is the most favorable place for the building of mills. In 1571, three mills were drawn onto Camuti's map: Janko's Mill, as well as the Big



Picnic area at Majdan

and Small Galija. The Big Galija Mill is located about 40 meters northwest of Our Lady of the Island. It dates back to the 11th century, and in the 16th century it had 15 mills. South of it was the Small Galija Mill. The Aljinović Mill was built northeast of the Island. It was rebuilt several times, and a Roman statue was built into the facade. At the very source of the River of Solin, there was the Klis Mill. The most picturesque one was Janko's Mill with a high tower, built southwest of Our Lady of the Island, on an old Roman bridge. The tower, built during the Turkish period, was demolished in 1941. The Small Gabrić and Big Gabrić mills were located on the southeast side of the island. The Big Gabrić Mill was demolished during World War II. The Small Gabrić Mill, which was located a little more to the south, was restored in the 19th century.

A small arch-shaped bridge and a tower constituting the oldest part of the mill and dating back to the 16th century have been preserved to this day.

There were also mills about a hundred meters north of the Hollow Church, as well as on the tributaries of the Jadro River, i.e. the Rupotina Stream or Elijah's Stream which flows into the Jadro River west of the Hollow Church. In 1729, Ante Benzon built a mill near Gradina, and its remains are still visible in the river.

In addition to mills, fulling mills in which local broadcloth was processed were often built, and they attest to the developed craft of broadcloth and thus indirectly to developed cattle-breeding, and especially sheep-breeding for wool.

Four mills of Solin have been preserved to this day: the Aljinović Mill, Big Galija, Small Galija, the Small Gabrić and Gašpina Mill, which has recently been completely renovated.

The most picturesque mill of Solin is the Gašpina Mill built in 1711. The mill was built by Luka Kljaković Gašpić. The southern part of the mill is the oldest, and an ancient tombstone stele featuring two spouses was used as the front door lintel. The mill has been rebuilt several times, and thus today we recognize four construction stages. At the mill, grain and corn were grinded, and grinding was paid for with money, while flour was sold or exchanged for milk and cheese. Grain would be brought in bags, on donkeys, or on horse-drawn carts. Whenever grinding could not be paid for with money, the miller would receive *multure*, flour due in return for the grinding service.

The mill had been a significant commercial destination throughout history, and after its renovation, during which two of the 15 mills were renovated, it became a significant place for the restoration and preservation of the traditional way of life, the intangible heritage of Solin promoted through a series of actions by the Association *Solinjani* ("People of Solin").

CHURCH OF ST. GEORGE ABOVE THE SOURCE OF THE JADRO RIVER

The Church of St. George is located northwest of the source of the Jadro River, at an elevation of 285 meters above sea level. It was built at the top of a hill dominating the abundant source of drinking water, which was significant in the Middle Ages. The church was mentioned in 1397 in the Reambulation of property of the Archbishop

of Split. Only the foundations of the old medieval church have been preserved to this day, while the present church was built later. In historical documents the church is referred to as the Church of St. *George of the River*.

Above the source of the Jadro River, there is also the church of St. Moses with a hermit's dwelling.

Just to the west of the church lie the remains of an old Croatian cemetery in the locality of Majdan.

MAJDAN

On the terraces above the river, there was a *villa rustica* from the imperial period.

Near the source of the Jadro River, on the right side of the river and northeast of the cement factory, an old Croatian necropolis was discovered, dating back to the 9th – 11th century. Grave goods from the necropolis were listed among the richest finds of old Croatian jewelry from the native area of the early medieval Croatian state. According to the finds of architectural plastics, it is assumed that an early Christian church existed in the area, and it was adapted in the second half of the 11th century by the introduction of wicker church furniture.

Beside the source of *Rika* (the Jadro River) there is a rich site of the *tupina* limestone, which began to be exploited in the late 19th century. With the construction of open *tupina* quarries, large areas along the river were gradually devastated. A cement factory was built in 1909, 800 meters from the source. Production was continuously increasing, and a total of 62 furnaces were constructed, with this industrial pool

employing 2500 workers in the period of its greatest prosperity. On the left bank of the river, housing, culture and health care facilities were built for cement industry workers. The “Vrilo” hydroelectric power plant with generators from 1909 and 1913 was built 200 meters downstream. It is a fine example of an early industrial building which has no purpose today.

In 1903, the narrow-gauge Split – Sinj railway line was opened, passing above the source of the Jadro River, where it partly entered a tunnel. The railway line was in operation until the 1960s.

During World War II, the Italian army built two bunkers on the Jadro River, one at the source of the river and the other on a hill 250 meters downstream.

Parts of Nature in the Split-Dalmatia County – “Sea and Karst”, within the “RiTour” project. As part of said activities, a pedestrian bridge leading across the Jadro River to the Municipality of Klis was reconstructed, new urban equipment (benches, bins and bicycle stands) and information boards were installed, horticultural landscaping was carried out, 6 new trees were planted, a system for separate waste collection was purchased, and ambient lighting was installed on the arch of the Diocletian Aqueduct near the source.

Today, the Majdan area is a significantly devastated space, but also a space with great potential and a spatial resource that can contribute to the tourism and educational development of the town of Solin through quality urban development.

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After World War II, an excursion site was arranged across the hydroelectric power plant.

Due to outdated equipment, the hydroelectric power plant was closed in 1998. Because of reduced interest in cement in the region, the cement factory was finally shut down in 2008, so revitalization of the premises was necessary following the abandonment of industrial activity. The beginning of this process started with the arrangement of excursion sites in Majdan and in the Special ichthyological reserve “Jadro-upper reaches”, conducted by the town of Solin and the Public Institution for the Management of Protected

The idea of revitalizing the former *tupina* quarry was addressed through interdisciplinary workshops and presented at the “Idea Camp” organized by the “European Cultural Foundation”. In 2015, the project was allocated resources for further research, which led to the project “Jadro-source of life”, financed by means of grants by the European Union through the Operational Program “Competitiveness and Cohesion 2014-2020”. The project, whose realization began in 2019, also included the area of the former *tupina* quarry in Majdan, where a multilateral development school will be established to boost the educational and tourist offer of the town of Solin.



View of Jadro and Gospin otok

NATURAL HERITAGE —

THE JADRO RIVER

The source of the Jadro River is located on the western slope of the Mosor Hill, 3 km east of ancient Salona. The karst source is located 33 m above sea level, and the total length of the river from its source to its mouth amounts to 4318 meters. As early as in the 10th century, emperor Constantine Porphyrogennetos praised the Jadro water as *“the most delicious of all waters”*. The Jadro River is still a reliable source of good quality drinking water which undergoes no special treatment except disinfection. The catchment area of the Jadro River occupies the central part of the Split-Dalmatia County. It belongs to

the Outer Dinarides and is characterized by a rocky area with a scarce vegetation cover. The Jadro River streams out of a limestone cave, with water coming to the surface from several openings. The source consists of the surface part and the underground (submerged) part. The underground part of the source consists of several openings and channels that have not been fully explored yet. On the surface part of the source, water streams out of a shallow cave on a steep rocky slope, from several waterfall-like openings, and flows into the valley where it forms the Jadro River. Today, the source is covered by a concrete structure which protects it from collapsing, and before the Second World War, a concrete dam was built in front of the source.



Diocletian aqueduct at the Jadro River source

In ancient times, there were two water supply systems, both receiving water from the Jadro River, which is a unique example of the construction and operation of two water supply systems at one source. The water supply system of Salona was built in the 1st century BC, and it was in operation until the 7th century. Diocletian's water supply system was built towards the end of the 3rd century, and it was reconstructed in the 19th century.

better-quality water, and intake also accounted for the amount of collected water to ensure sufficient water in order to sustain life in the river and at the mouth, due to food production. Together, the two water supply systems collected about 1000 l/s. The intake structures of both water supply systems were destroyed by the power of water as well as by human activity, and in the Middle Ages, the power of water from the Jadro River started being used by a number of mills.

By moving intake structures outside the main stream of the water flow, which also carries the highest pollution load, provided

AQUEDUCT OF SALONA

The water supply system of Salona was

built in the 1st century BC, and for seven centuries it supplied water to the town and the economic estates in its vicinity, providing drinking water to about 60,000 inhabitants. The intake structure of the Aqueduct of Salona has not been preserved to this day, and an aqueduct channel was laid along the right northern slope of the source, where a cutting was made in solid rock to divert water from the source. In 1908, about 200 meters of the ancient channel were demolished when a new channel was built to power the cement industry hydropower plant. The Solin Aqueduct route was investigated as part of the Salona archeological explorations, and the channel was found in front of the northern town wall, as well as in several places outside town walls. During recent archaeological explorations conducted in 2014–2015, the entire route of the Aqueduct of Salona was defined. Its length amounts to 4879 meters, it mainly follows the configuration of the terrain, and it is made up of a shallowly laid channel made of stone slabs whose corners were sealed with waterproof mortar. The channel was 60–120 cm wide and 90 cm high. Water was channeled to masonry tanks, from which lead pipes were used to supply households. Three tanks – water-dividing buildings, all located along the town wall have been preserved in Salona. Water was used to supply households and the industry, as well as for the needs of public buildings (thermal baths) and fountains.

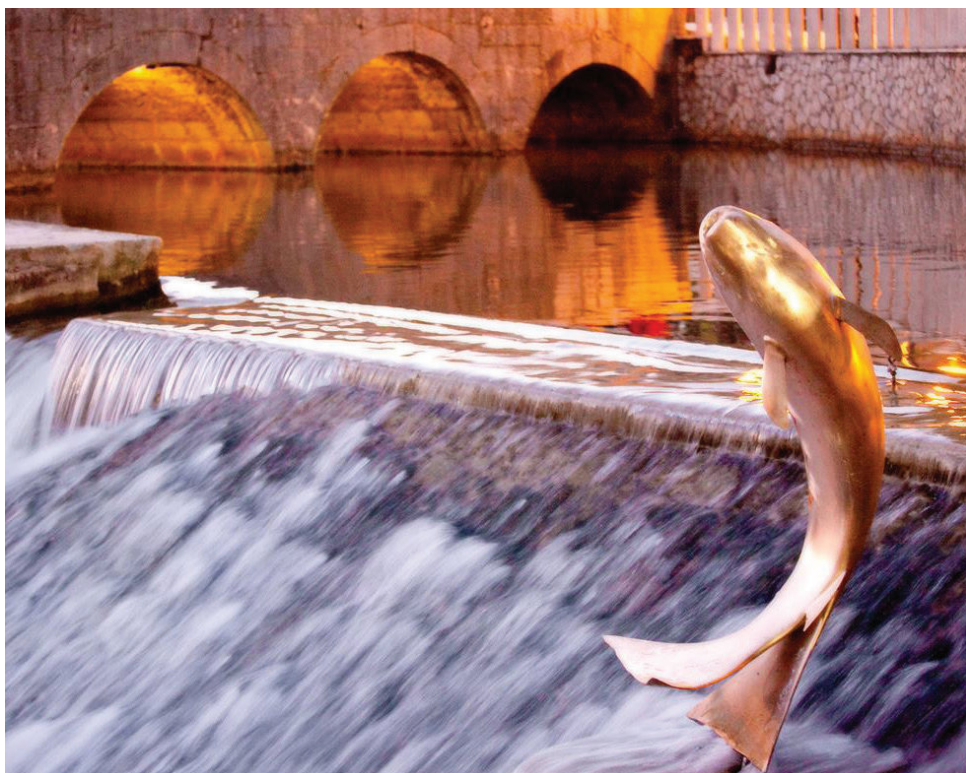
DIOCLETIAN AQUEDUCT

The Diocletian Aqueduct was built at the end of the 3rd century for the needs of the imperial palace built by 305 AD, when Emperor Diocletian abdicated and returned to Dalmatia. The channel of the Diocletian Aqueduct was laid along the left – south slope of the Jadro River source, perpendicular to the stream of water, between two rocks.

The Diocletian Aqueduct was reconstructed in the 19th century and has been largely preserved, researched and documented. The intake structure was constructed in the late 19th century, and during the reconstruction of the water supply system, the ancient channel was reconstructed to a significant degree. In 1908, a gravity channel was built along the right bank of the Jadro River, and it supplied the hydropower plant of the cement industry. At that time, a sluice with dams was constructed from the intake structure of the restored Diocletian's water supply system to the hydropower plant channel, regulating the level and flow of water in both channels in order to provide enough water to supply the city of Split, as well as for the needs of the hydropower plant.

The route of the channel leading from the source to the water tank reconstructed in the 19th century, located 450 meters north of the Palace, is fully known and has been largely explored. In order to ensure a continuous slope of the channel over the entire route, the channel is partly built on bridges and tunnels. The total length of the Diocletian Aqueduct amounts to 9 km, of which 6.6 km are laid in the ground, and 4 bridges and 4 tunnels have been built, as well as a 100 meter-long cutting in solid rock. Given the large capacity of the water supply, it is assumed that the channel supplied not only the Palace, but also other users, the inhabitants of Spalatum, as well as economic complexes and agricultural areas along the route from the source to the Palace.

Following the cessations of operation of Diocletian's water supply system in the 7th century, the population used rainwater from cisterns, water from wells or smaller



The statue of the softmouth trout in Solin

sources and directly from the Jadro River. Due to the rapid development of Split from the beginning of the 19th century onwards, the need for the construction of a municipal water supply system appeared, and the possibility of restoring Diocletian's water supply system appeared to be a suitable solution. Pre-intervention research found that 35% of the ancient channel was completely preserved, 25% had to be bridged and 40% had to be rebuilt. Three large bridges – Karabaš, Bilice and Smokovik – have been completely reconstructed, while the Mostine bridge has been repaired.

In 1950, a new channel with a capacity of 2000 l/s was built for the needs of

water supply of Split, Solin, Kaštela and Trogir, as well as of newly built industrial plants. The new channel was to replace Diocletian's channel in providing Split and the wider area of the Bay of Kaštela with water, but Diocletian's channel did not cease to operate as the water demand was constantly increasing, and thus the capacity of the newly constructed channel was not sufficient.

The route of the Diocletian Aqueduct is in operation from the source to the Ravne Njive pumping station, with the length of 5185 meters. The original channel was broken and demolished in several places in town, but the builders always aimed to

reconstruct or bridge the destroyed parts. Today, the entire route of the Diocletian Aqueduct is a protected cultural property. As part of the RiTour project, archaeological excavations were conducted at the aqueduct arch near the source of the Jadro River, and ambient lighting was installed.

SOFTMOUTH TROUT OF THE JADRO RIVER

The ichthyofauna of the Jadro River is scarce, but interesting. The endemic softmouth trout of Solin (*Salmo obtusirostris salonitana*) lives only there, which is why in 1984, the upper reaches of the Jadro River were declared an ichthyological reserve.

The source part of the Jadro River constitutes an important habitat for the softmouth trout. At the very source there is a small reservoir with the function of a hydroelectric power plant, as well as a pumping site. The bottom at the station is rocky and pebbly, and parts with and without aquatic vegetation alternate. Water temperature at the Jadro station has a mean value of about 13 °C, the ideal temperature for the softmouth trout.

The softmouth trout of Solin has specific physical features which distinguish it from other species. Its head is rounded at the front which is short and fleshy. Its mouth is relatively small, its teeth are tiny and they protrude slightly from its soft lips. The sides of its body are streaked with dark and red spots, while its back is grayish yellow. Traces of dark and red spots are visible on the dorsal fin, but there are no spots on other fins. The trout feeds on gammarus shrimps and snails, but also invertebrates which fall on the water. The maximum recorded weight of a trout is 4 kg, but on average it weighs 2 kg. It inhabits quieter parts of the watercourse.

It spawns in the spring, in March, and lives in the Jadro and Žrnovnica rivers.

The source area of the Jadro River is inhabited by four species of fish from two families. In the Jadro fish community, the softmouth trout of Solin and the eel are characteristic and expected, but the Californian trout and probably the brown trout have been brought to the Jadro River. The California trout can very easily adapt to new conditions and is often found among indigenous species, such as the softmouth trout of Solin. The Jadro River is dominated by eel (44.7%) and the softmouth trout of Solin (38.8%). The California trout accounts for 16.5% of species and is less frequent than said two indigenous species. However, California trout offspring have recently been coming to the upper reaches stations, and that could endanger the indigenous species.

In the upper reaches of the Jadro River, suitable habitats for the softmouth trout have been preserved, namely gravel beds and areas covered with plants. At low water levels, vegetation is extremely dense and lush throughout the water course, leaving relatively little open and free water surface. Trout habitats in the Jadro River are relatively well preserved. However, there are numerous dams and barriers in the lower stretches which would need to be modified to ensure passage of the softmouth trout. The impacts of the hydropower plant, the emergence of new species, and especially the California trout, as well as anthropogenic impacts of the softmouth trout offspring on spawning grounds and habitats pose a threat to the indigenous trout species. The Jadro River is a short river flowing through a highly urbanized area, so the watercourse should be looked at as a town park, and the ichthyological reserve should be extended to the entire river. It

is imperative to protect the fish, aquatic animals and the surrounding vegetation, as well as to focus on the cleanliness of water and river banks. It is recommended to abolish all forms of fishing, or to limit it to fly fishing and release of fish, as well as to significantly strengthen the fish guarding service. A management plan for the Solin trout species ought to be developed, similarly as for other known trout species, and further research, as well as the monitoring necessary for the protection of the species should be provided.

The monument erected in the center of Solin in 2011 thanks to the diligence of local enthusiast testifies to the importance of the softmouth trout *solinka* for the tradition and identity of the town of Solin. The monument is erected under a waterfall, in the river itself, and a bronze sculpture with ceramic inlays evoking the distinctive pigmentation of *solinka* depicts the trout in its characteristic jump.

The Jadro River constitutes a comparative advantage of Solin, and its source is a unique combination of natural beauty, as well as cultural and industrial heritage.

GASTRONOMY

Traditional dishes of Solin originate from the Mediterranean diet and are prepared using one's own local resources, which gives them a distinctive taste. Olive oil is an autochthonous product and the most important element of the gastronomic offer of the town of Solin, important for the development and promotion of the offer of Solin. With its 140 members, the Salona Association of Olive Growers promotes olive oil and educates the local population about the importance of olive growing, as well as enriches the tourist offer of the town of

Solin by creating olive paths, offering the possibility of participation of interested visitors in the harvest and processing of olive fruits.

Trout and eels, the most widespread fish of the Jadro River, have also found their place in the gastronomic offer of Solin. Although nowadays trout comes from fish farms given the fact that the indigenous softmouth trout *solinka* species is protected and must not be fished, original recipes have been preserved both in the families of Solin and in the tourist gastronomic offer of the town. Trout were traditionally fried in a pan after having been rolled in bread crumbs or flour so a crispy crust would form, and they were served with a side dish – polenta or seasonal vegetables. Eels were traditionally fished in the Jadro River and prepared in two ways, as a stew or on the grill, skewered and with chard and potatoes as a side dish. "Broad beans and pasta", a rich seasonal and a traditional "farm workers" dish, and its Venetian version, "broad beans with artichokes", are still very much present in Solin. The local Solin version of beans, a traditional workmen's dish, is also often prepared in the area – beans are cooked as a broth with dried meats and peeled tomatoes. The gastronomy of Solin also preserved a dish reflecting the period when Solin was under Ottoman influence, namely "*arambaši*" or "*kapulari*". It is a dish made from minced meat and sauerkraut, traditionally eaten in Solin during the Feast of the Nativity of Mary. Small *arambašići* are especially held in very high regard, that is when two *arambašići* are made from one sauerkraut leaf.

Given the large number of mills in Solin, flour and bakery products were always abundant. As for desserts, we should mention "*hroštule*", deep-fried pastries traditionally prepared for weddings.

CONCLUSION

The river of Solin, which springs at the foot of the cliffs of Mosor, had for centuries been bringing life to this area with relatively scarce water. The Jadro River, called Salon in ancient times, was an essential prerequisite for the creation and development of the ancient town of Salona, the administrative center of the province of Dalmatia. This short-course river which never dries up made it possible to build two ancient aqueducts, the Aqueduct of Salona and the Diocletian Aqueduct, as well as to supply water to the city and the imperial palace from the same source. Significant sacral buildings of the early Croatian state

to cement production developed near the source of the Jadro River, and in 1909, the “Vrilo” hydroelectric power plant, today a fine example of an early industrial building, was built near the factory. The abandoned and partially destroyed area of the former *tupina* quarry is also the town’s future resource for the creation of recreational and educational content. The endemic softmouth trout of Solin (*Salmo obtusirostris salonitana*) lives in the Jadro River, which is why in 1984, the upper reaches of the Jadro River were declared an ichthyological reserve.

The Jadro River constitutes a comparative advantage of Solin, and its source is a unique

The Jadro River, called Salon in ancient times, was an essential prerequisite for the creation and development of the ancient town of Salona

were erected along the Jadro River, and two churches were built, dedicated to Our Lady and St. Stephen, namely burial and coronation churches of Croatian kings, while Our Lady’s Island is nowadays a national Roman Marian sanctuary. Around the Church of Our Lady from the 10th – 11th century, the medieval and later Turkish fortress of Gradina was built, while the “Hollow Church”, the coronation church of King Zvonimir built in the 11th century as an Early Christian church, was preserved a bit more upstream. The river rich in water that would not dry up even in the summer months was suitable for building mills, which constituted a significant activity and an important source of income in the past. Of the numerous salt mills four have been preserved to date, and the recently renovated Gašpina Mill became the center of cultural life and of the nurturing of the ethnic tradition of Solin. At the beginning of the 20th century, an early industry related

combination of natural beauty, as well as cultural and industrial heritage, thereby creating all the necessary prerequisites for the development of tourism. The Ri Tour project, whose primary objective is to valorize the cultural and natural heritage of the three rivers, as well as sustainable use of natural resources, enabled Solin to develop a Tourism Development Strategy for the town of Solin, research important for the preservation of the endemic saltwater trout, research related to the better understanding and future presentation of structures of the water supply system of Salona, as well as the Diocletian water supply system at the Jadro source, plus the infrastructure and municipal planning of excursion sites in the Majdan area. All activities carried out through the project contribute to the valorization, recognition and strengthening of the cultural and natural heritage resources of the Jadro River in Solin in light of better-quality tourism development.



A view of Stjepan grad

Blagaj

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

The older districts of Blagaj (*mahalas*) are located in a relatively narrow area along the bank of the Buna River; the development of the settlement was favorably influenced by the proximity of the Neretva River valley, one of the most important trade routes on the eastern Adriatic coast (the ancient “Via Narenti”). Archaeological remains confirm the existence of settlements in this area since prehistoric times, and the remains of two Roman fortifications have been found on the Blagaj Hill. The medieval settlement on the outskirts of the fortress during the Ottoman times transformed into a kasaba with residential and public buildings: a *čaršija*, a mosque with a harem,

kuttab and han, as well as several city and village *mahalas*. The residential areas (*mahalas*) were clearly separated from the center of trade and crafts (*čaršija*), the place of business for various artisans and traders whose revenues made a significant contribution to the prosperity of the city. With the establishment of a *khanqah* (Tekke) with a caravanserai (*musafirhan*) on the Buna River, the outskirts of Blagaj developed into an important religious center. However, under the Austro-Hungarian rule, the importance of Blagaj declined, and at the end of the 19th century, travel writer Carl Peetz wrote that it had about 700 inhabitants.

SITE DESCRIPTION AND TOURIST CONTENT

With its historical and natural beauties, Blagaj is the pearl of Herzegovina and an inevitable stop for every visitor to this area. The source of the Buna River is one of the most magnificent karst springs in the Dinarides, while the enchanting Tekke, a building that seems to float between the water and the rocks, attracts visitors from all over the world. The Buna is inhabited by an endemic trout species, the Neretva softmouth trout; this species is endangered in the Buna due to the urbanization of the area. Stjepan-grad or the Blagaj Fort is one of the main tourist attractions of Blagaj. During the Middle Ages, this fortified town at the top of a steep cliff was the capital of Hum rulers (the area later known as Herzegovina). The Blagaj suburbs sprung up during the Ottoman era, following the construction of several residential and public buildings in various zones of settlement around the fortress. Karađoz Bey was a great benefactor of Blagaj and Herzegovina, and as his endowment he left funds to build fifteen monumental buildings as well as a number of shops and craft workshops in Mostar to support his endowments. In Blagaj, Karađoz Bey's endowment was used to build a hammam on the Buna. This position enabled the direct supply of water to the hammam using a special mechanism. The stone bridge over the Buna was also built with the help of the Bey's endowment and is still in use today. The second Blagaj bridge, the so-called Danijal-Pasha's Bridge, was unfortunately destroyed in 1945, and only photographs and drawings testify to the monumentality of this 102-meter-long stone bridge. The Emperor's Mosque was erected at the beginning of Suleiman's reign in 1520 or 1521,

while the Orthodox Church of St. Basil of Ostrog was built in 1892 and the Catholic Church of the Holy Trinity in 1908. The few buildings that have been preserved stand for residential complexes of the Ottoman era, the most notable being Velagićevina, which was likely constructed in 1776 based on a preserved inscription.

Just 12 kilometers away, Mostar invites every Blagaj visitor to visit its attractions, of which this urban center of Herzegovina does not lack. Some of the most notable attractions include the famous Old Bridge with its Tara, Herceguša and Halebija towers, the Koski Mehmed Pasha's Mosque, the old Orthodox Church of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and archeological remains of a late antique dual basilica in Cim.

STJEPAN GRAD

The old town of Blagaj was built on top of a hard-to-reach karst hill, near the source of the Buna River. There were settlements in the area since prehistoric times; the north-eastern hill-top harbors remains of a Roman or Late Roman fort. The first written record of Blagaj, although indirect, can be found in the writings of Emperor Constantine Porphyrogenitus from the mid-10th century, who mentions the cities of Bona and Hum; the 1423 Peace Treaty between Duke Sandalj Hranić and the Venetians makes a reference to the city of Blagaj. In the Middle Ages, Bosnian rulers resided in Blagaj; the Blagaj Fortress was named after Duke Stjepan Vukčić Kosača.

Blagaj is adapted to the configuration of the surrounding terrain – a plateau above steep cliffs – and is accessible via 900 meters of heavily undulating serpentine roads. As part of the RiTour project –



Velagičevina
residential complex

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“Valorization of cultural and natural heritage through cross-border cooperation of urban tourist destinations on the Adriatic basin karst rivers”, the road has been cleared, reconstructed and restored and furnished with benches for visitors, with an interactive tourist info board still in the pipelines. The

walls of the fort are 1.5-2 meters thick, and what of them has been preserved stands at 12 to 14 meters tall. The fort’s entrance was protected by a multi-element defense system and three projecting towers that leaned against the eastern wall. The fortress was constantly upgraded, in line with the

development of defense technologies. The Blagaj fort thus enables us to study the characteristics of various fortification elements, from its construction in the 4th century, its secondary construction phase in the 6th century, and the interventions

family estate in Dalmatia and finally to Rome. As the only legitimate representative of the subjugated Christian kingdom, the Bosnian queen was an inspiration to humanists, who composed Latin epigrams in her honor. The queen herself was particularly active in

A characteristic of the oriental residential architecture is the separation of the housekeeping and business quarters from the living area

carried out from the 7th to the 15th century, which are more difficult to distinguish due to various more recent interventions. The walls of Blagaj encircled a palace with an irregular rectangular ground plan, built in the late 14th or early 15th century, at the time of Duke Sandalj Hranić. The central position in the city was occupied by a building with a rectangular ground plan and an internal circular tank, probably of Ottoman origin. Then a mosque was erected, but according to a report by travel writer Evliya Çelebi (1664), the crew of the fort preferred to stay in a nearby settlement so that the city looked “as if it had just come out of the hands of its builders.”

Many significant historical figures had ties to the medieval Blagaj, the most important being Katarina Kosača, the last Bosnian queen. She was born in Blagaj to Stjepan Kosača, Duke of the Hum Region, which took the name Herzegovina after him. More specifically, Emperor Friedrich’s Charter from 1448 refers to Stjepan as “Herzog”, German for Duke, so Herzegovina became the official name of Hum. The marriage between Katarina and Bosnian Prince Stjepan Tomaš Kotromanić (1446) united Herzegovina and Bosnia; however, after the Ottoman invasion of the kingdom in 1463, Katarina was exiled, first to the Kosača

diplomatic circles. Even while exile in Split, she maintained regular communication with “Bosniaks” and “Ugrians” (Hungarians), as well as the Duke of Milan of the Sforza family. However, key support came to her from the papal curia: upon her arrival to Rome, Pope Paul granted her a monthly stipend that allowed her to maintain a minimum number of clerks who constituted the Bosnian court in exile. In Rome, the Queen and her courtiers performed many pious and humble acts. This is why Katarina is still venerated today as a blessed woman and is buried in a place of honor in the Basilica of St. Mary in Aracoeli, Rome.

VELAGIĆEVINA RESIDENTIAL COMPLEX

The construction of this complex, considered to be one of the most valuable Ottoman housing complexes in Herzegovina, started in 1776. The building complex is located on the banks of the Buna, 200 meters downstream from its source; the proximity of the river allowed for the development of production buildings, such as watermills and fulling mills.

The influence of Islam on the spatial disposition of the complex is evident in the closing off of its contents to its neighborhood and its orientation towards the surrounding



The remains of Karadžoz Bey's Hammam

nature. The residential quarters consist of a house, a yard (*avlija*) and a garden (*baščā*). A characteristic of the oriental residential architecture is the separation of the housekeeping and business quarters from the living area. Gardens are an integral part of the housing culture, and in this complex, due to a slope in the terrain, they are terraced and accessible by stairs. The entrance to the family courtyard (the so-called women's courtyard) is set furthered apart, to protect the privacy of the family life. All yards are interconnected and paved with river pebbles. In addition to the facades, which are opened with glazed windows and decorated with wooden ornaments, the interior of the house is lavishly furnished with original fitted and freestanding

wooden furniture, often decorated with paint and metal threads embossed in notches in the wood to form geometric and floral motifs. Musafirhana is another part of the complex; this was a lodging that provided free stay and food to travelers. Barns (*ahari*) are separated from the residential part and are located along the Buna, next to a watermill and fulling mills.

KARAĐOZ BEY'S HAMMAM

This hammam was built at the end of the 16th century using Karadžoz Bey's waqf. Zaim Hajji Mehmed Bey, known in Mostar as Karadžoz Bey, was the greatest benefactor not only of Mostar and its surroundings but also of the whole Herzegovina. In addition to his



Karađoz Bey's Bridge in Blagaj

endowment, he left enough assets to build fifteen monumental buildings as well as several shops and craft workshops in Mostar to support his endowments.

As Muslims are obliged to wash their entire body once a week, in addition to daily ritual washing, public baths were built in almost all settlements under the Ottoman rule. The Blagaj hammam was leased every year, and besides the manager, its staff included the *tallak*, a person who would give massages or even wipe down hammam users, and the *kahvedžija*, a person who brewed coffee and prepared the hookah. The hammams were at the center of the social life of any Muslim community, as they welcomed all people,

regardless of their social status, age, or gender. However, women and men were not allowed to use hammams at the same time. There were the so-called single hammams, where women could bathe during the day and men early in the morning or late at night, and double hammams, where women and men were completely separated.

Today, the preserved section of the Blagaj Hammam includes a *shadirvan*, a waiting area and cloakroom known as *kapaluk*, a transitional heated space, a *halvet* or a bathing room, a *hazine* or a water tank and a *ćulhan*, a boiler room. A special feature of the Blagaj Hammam is its location by the river, enabling direct supply of water via a special mechanism.



An old photo of Danijal-Pasha's Bridge

KARAĐOZ-BEY'S BRIDGE

Like the hammam described above, the Blagaj Bridge over the Buna was built as the endowment of Zaim Hajji Karađoz Bey. It was built on the site of an earlier wooden bridge around 1570, as recorded in a document mentioning the bridge. The sixteenth century was a time of intensive bridge building in Bosnia and Herzegovina: 34 bridges were constructed, and some of the most prominent bridge builders included Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent, Grand Vizier Rüstem Pasha, his brother Karađoz Bey, and others. In the mid-19th century, the Blagaj Bridge fell into disrepair and was rebuilt in 1849 by Belfe Kadira, daughter of Ali Bey Velagić.

lead, in particular the arches, cornices and railings. It has five arches that extend towards the center of the bridge, resulting in the characteristic "broken" shape of the bridge. Unfortunately, the shape has been disrupted by a later elevation of the road level. The bridge rests on four stone piles in the river bed and two abutments on the banks. Judging from the method of its construction, the bridge was built by local master masons. Three of its arches were reconstructed after a bombing in World War II, and the bridge was again reconstructed in the 1960s and is still in use today.

DANIJAL-PASHA'S BRIDGE

Near the mouth of the Buna River where it debouches into the Neretva lie the remains of the longest bridge in Herzegovina, the



Tekke at the Buna spring

so-called “Roman Bridge”, referred to by the travel writer Evliya Çelebi by the name “Danijal-Pasha’s Bridge”. The bridge was about 102 meters long and had fourteen arches. The legend of the Roman origin of the bridge was based on the record of a Russian consul came to Mostar in 1857 and was so delighted by the Old Bridge that he wrote that the bridge was built by the Romans; this legend was then transferred to Danijal-Pasha’s Bridge. This bridge was a classic example of an Ottoman stone bridge, with slender concrete piles and a “fractured” shape that resulted from the span of the arches gradually increasing towards the center of the bridge. The bridge was unfortunately bombed in 1945, and a new concrete bridge has been built in its place, while the remains of the old bridge are still visible in the river bed.

TEKKE

The Musafirhana in Blagaj was likely built immediately following the establishment of the Ottoman rule in Herzegovina, and no later than 1520. It was originally administered by the Bektashi Order, but came under the rule of the Halveti after the rebuilding in the 18th century by the Mostar mufti. The Blagaj Tekke was first mentioned in 1664, in Evliya Çelebi’s travel journal, who wrote that the tekke of the Khalwati order at the Buna source was a meeting place of dervishes who gathered there for learned and friendly talks.

The Blagaj Tekke was restored after a landslide in 1851, at the behest of Omar Pasha Latas in a “Baroque Constantinople” style, with romantic elements in the form of



Detail of the Tekke interior, the wooden ceiling panel

carved wooden motifs. Baroque influence is visible in the design of the mildly curving roof and decorative elements on the tympanum of the main facade. The building has three levels: the basement, ground floor and first floor. Two of its facades face its surroundings while two lean against a living rock.

Next to the tekke is a türbe (mausoleum) that, according to tradition, guards the remains of Sarı Saltık and Aşık Pasha. There is more than one location around the globe that is thought to contain Sarı Saltık's tumb, and Blagaj is one of them. This important historical figure is venerated for bringing Islam to Bosnia and Herzegovina

but also as the founder of the Blagaj Tekke. According to the legend, Evliya the "Good" rode through Blagaj towards the source of the Buna, from which he did not return. Only his horse, saber and clothes were found at the source, and the tekke was erected to venerate the holy man.

EMPEROR'S MOSQUE

The Sultan Suleiman Mosque was constructed at the very beginning of Suleiman's reign, in 1520/1521, as evidenced by the inscription preserved above its entrance. It was one of the oldest subdome mosques in Bosnia and Herzegovina; however, during the

Emperor's
mosque in Blagaj



reconstruction of its collapsed dome in 1892, a new wooden dome structure was built according to the design of Austrian architect Max David and placed on top of an octagonal tambour that is opened with windows. The mosque has a central square floor plan, but the transfer of the load of the wooden dome under the tent roof was not constructed in

the usual way via pendentives, but using steel supports. The mihrab niche is located along the southeast wall of the mosque, facing the Qibla, and to the right of the mihrab is a lavishly decorated stone minbar.

To the south of the main entrance is a harem of fifteen tombs with nišan tombstones



The Church of the Holy Trinity, Blagaj

of more recent origin. The local Miljevina stone lent itself to the carving of calligraphic inscriptions of unusual shapes, some of them undulating into various forms, and some of them creating circular shapes. The octagonal stone minaret is about 20 meters tall.

THE CHURCH OF THE HOLY TRINITY

The Catholic Church of the Holy Trinity was built in 1908, the year when Bosnia and Herzegovina was annexed by the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. The church is neo-

Romanesque, and of particular interest among its ornamental features are its rows of blind arcades under the cornice. Each side facade of the church nave is opened with four windows with a semicircular arch; the bell tower is located on the west side of the

and openings on four opposing sides. The exterior wall made from regularly-shaped chiseled blocks is visible along the entire bell tower, while the rest of the church is plastered and painted white. The only ornaments on the side walls of the church

Although the shortest river in Herzegovina, Buna has been crossed by three bridges since its earliest times

church, just above the entrance. The church consists of the narthex, naos and apse, with the sacristy in the south. The design of the bell tower is particularly interesting: it is a square floor plan bell tower with a flat roof, topped with a balustrade with angular towers. The top of the bell tower consists of two cubes connected by four concrete beams forming a pyramid at the top of the bell tower.

THE CHURCH OF ST. BASIL OF OSTROG

The Orthodox Church of St. Basil of Ostrog is located at the entrance to Blagaj, with the main portal facing the west and the shrine facing the east. To the south of the church lie ruins of the priests' residence. The construction of the church began in 1892, as stated by an inscription inside the church, and the bell tower was built in 1934. The church has a rectangular floor plan and its semicircular apse is vaulted by a semi-spherical cap. The bell tower with a squarish floor plan is in the west, above the main portal, set on top of four massive pylons that are connected by semicircular arches. The first floor of the bell tower has three windows; the western window is framed by textured stone blocks. The third floor of the bell tower has an octagonal cross-section

nave are the prominent corner stone blocks and those at the foot of the walls (plinth). The nave is illuminated by three elongated semicircular windows. There is a single window on the exterior wall of the apse.

The church possessed a valuable collection of icons dating from the 15th to 19th centuries, most notably: "An Unknown Saint", "Descent to Hades", "St. John the Evangelist", etc. The iconostasis of the church was made in 1893 and features an oil painting of twenty saints.

NATURAL HERITAGE —

BUNA RIVER

The source of the Buna River is one of the most enticing karst springs in the Dinarides, and has been protected as a hydrological nature reserve due to its uniqueness and distinctiveness. The total area of the Buna River basin is estimated at 900 m², displaying all forms of surface (sinkholes, karren, doline or karst valleys, etc.) and underground karst (caves, potholes). There are several settlements located along the Buna River: Blagaj, Kosor, Malo Polje and Buna. Although the shortest river in Herzegovina, Buna has been crossed by three bridges since its earliest times, two of which are still in operation: Leha's



Sack cheese

Bridge and Karađoz Bey's Bridge

The temperature of the Buna River is about 8°C, and the purity of the water at its source allows it to be used as a water supply. The air temperature in this area may rise steeply in summer, up to 45°C, and it rarely falls below zero in winter. The land surrounding the Buna River is very fertile and is used to intensively cultivate grapes, vegetables, fruits, medicinal plants, while honey plants abound in the surrounding forests. The area is inhabited by legally protected endemic species, such as the Southern maidenhair fern (*Adiantum capillus-veneris*) and Dalmatian Laburnum (*Petteria ramentacea*); unfortunately, some animal species, such as the griffon vulture and chamois, have disappeared from the area. Due to their exceptional value, several

sites in the area are protected as natural monuments: in addition to the Buna River spring, there are also the Bunica spring with its lake, the Ševrljica Cave and Green Cave in Blagaj and another, nameless cave in Podveležje.

The fish of the Buna River include several trout species, the most interesting being the endemic softmouth trout (*Salmo obtusirostris*), which, in addition to the Buna, is also abundant in the Neretva (to which Buna is a tributary) and Zeta River (in Montenegro). The softmouth trout is the oldest salmonid in the Balkans, estimated to have been present in the area for 2.5 million years. Due to its appearance and rareness, this species has been attracting fishermen as well as ichthyologists for a very long



Buna River

time. Taking into account its morphological characteristics, there are four variants of the softmouth trout; in addition to the variety that inhabits the Neretva and its tributaries, there are also varieties in the rivers Krka, Jadro, Žrnovnica and Zeta. The Neretva softmouth trout is critically endangered and efforts are being made towards artificial breeding and restocking of its natural habitat.

In addition to the softmouth trout, there are 75 fish species in the Neretva and its tributaries, 12 of which are endemic. The local populace has exploited the rich fish stocks as a source of food since the earliest times; today, they are the cornerstone of widely popular sport fishing. In addition, the Herzegovina-Neretva Canton/Mostar County Tourist Board has been hosting the

International Fly-Fishing Cup. This Cup is one of the activities in the framework of the RiTour project – “Valorization of cultural and natural heritage through cross-border cooperation of urban tourist destinations on the Adriatic basin karst rivers”, funded by the European Union. The Cup was launched in 2018 with the aim of promoting the Buna River and its surroundings, but also to highlight the need for the protection of the softmouth trout. The competition track is nine kilometers long, allowing competitors to enjoy the natural beauty of the Buna and Blagaj. Fly fishing is a technically demanding fishing discipline (which can also be artistically demanding, as making a fly requires a lot of creativity and knowledge) that brings dozens of fishermen to Blagaj every year to compete individually or in teams.

GREEN CAVE

The Green Cave is a prehistoric cave settlement located above the source of the Buna, in an almost inaccessible location on a tall gorge above the water. This Neolithic site consists of two rock shelters, called the Little and the Great Green Cave. The basic cultural layer is located in the Great Green Cave (posterior), as the boulders there form a natural border and protection between the front and back of the cave, which was used as a living area. Archaeological studies have not found any fixed hearths, but large quantities of ash in all archeological layers

versions of this signature Herzegovina dish of Ottoman origin, but the basic ingredients include ground beef (in Mostar, lamb may be used instead), rice, sweet paprika, grated carrots and blanched kale leaves. This leafy plant from the cabbage family is omnipresent in the Herzegovina diet as well as that of the Dalmatia Hinterland, as it adapts easily to all climates and may be harvested even in winter. Recently, raščika (kale) had been extolled as a superfood due to its low caloric value and high nutrient content, but Herzegovina farmers have been preserving the raščika (kale) seeds from times immemorial, as this plant has

Under-the-bell (sač or peka) roasting technique has been known since the Neolithic times

indicate numerous firesides on the ground. A small number of primitive stone and bone tools (only 6 pieces) has been discovered in the cave, but the ceramic material abounds; it is typologically significant and may be sorted into three strata: Early Bronze Age, Late Neolithic and Later and Middle Neolithic (the Neolithic in the Middle Balkans began around 6,500 BCE).

GASTRONOMY

The Buna valley abounds with fertile fields that yield a number of staples that have been a feature of the Herzegovina cuisine, and the mild Mediterranean climate enables farming and the production of meat and dairy that enrich the traditional plates of this region.

Perhaps the best-known heritage recipe in Herzegovina is the japrak, a spicy minced meat in raščika (kale) wrap. There are several

saved them from starvation in times of scarcity. As in ancient times, raščika (kale) is in Herzegovina today eaten simply boiled in water, with potatoes and dried meat, lamb and veal, and may be combined with beans, legumes and other cabbages. In addition to raščika (kale), the people of Herzegovina may roll their ground meat in sauerkraut or vine leaves, as well as use it to stuff peppers, red onions, zucchinis and tomatoes. These dishes of the Ottoman origin have been on the plates of the Herzegovina people for centuries and are the staples of its traditional cuisine.

Corn from the New World arrived to Herzegovina via Venice and Dalmatia, and one of the most popular traditional Herzegovinian dishes made with cornmeal or polenta is called *lučnica*. A good *lučnica* calls for homemade corn flour milled in a watermill and then cooked and covered in a sauce made with a mixture of garlic, butter

and sour milk. Although seemingly simple, this dish requires a great deal of experience to make; it even features in a well-known saying, that it might be easier to give birth than to cook a good lučnica. Except as part of lučnica, polenta is eaten as a side dish with meat and fish; young corn is delicious just simply boiled or baked on a grill, but also in salads, soups and stews.

Under-the-bell (sač or peka) roasting technique has been known since the Neolithic times — Illyrian ceramic bells have been found at several sites that were inhabited by these tribes, which goes to

of Herzegovinian cheese at the end of each summer. Cream cheese or kaymak is made only in summer, when cows graze the best grass and when their milk is of superior quality. However, the production of kaymak is not limited to Herzegovina, as this cheese of Ottoman origin is also produced in other South Slavic countries.

At the end of the year, ripe plum and pomace (the solid remains of grapes after pressing for wine) are used to make fruit brandy or rakija, a hard liquor that has helped inhabitants of Herzegovina survive cold winters for centuries. It is estimated that as much as

At the end of the year, ripe plum and pomace (the solid remains of grapes after pressing for wine) are used to make fruit brandy or rakija, a hard liquor that has helped inhabitants of Herzegovina survive cold winters for centuries

show that same cooking methods have been used in Herzegovina (as well as Dalmatia) for millennia. Bread and meat with potatoes and vegetables and herbs (laurel and rosemary) is prepared using this technique. The most commonly roasted meat is lamb and goat, but also chicken, especially young rooster. Cheese and other dairy products are on another level in Herzegovina, a traditionally farming region. Sack cheese, kaymak, škripavac cheese, and Livno cheese are the feathers in Herzegovina's cap. The Buna River basin is famous for its famed cheese products. Visitors may be particularly interested in sack cheese due to its peculiar method of preparation. The cheese is stored and ripened in specially designed sheepskin sacks, and the quality and centuries-old popularity of this cheese is evidenced by the records from 1300 of the inhabitants of Dubrovnik eagerly awaiting the shipments

70% of plums in the Balkans is used for the production of plum brandy, which is only logical, as no Herzegovina home would think to wish a guest a welcome without a miniature cup of this strong liquor.

The four thousand plant species that grow in Herzegovina are an excellent precondition for bees keeping and the production of high-quality honey. The art of beekeeping has been passed from generation to generation, but the introduction of hives with mobile honeycombs in the mid-nineteenth century started a new era of honey production in Herzegovina.



The Old Bridge

Mostar

Due to its historical and political significance, Blagaj was the main urban center of this area until the Ottoman conquest in 1473, as evidenced by the popular saying, “Sheher Blagaj and Mostar Kasaba”. Although Blagaj became the seat and residence of the Qadi after the Ottoman conquest, Mostar gradually gained in prominence and became a new center, as evidenced by its rich architecture, which is definitely worth a visit.

EARLY CHRISTIAN MOSTAR

Eight sites with confirmed or presumed early Christian buildings have been registered in the Mostar area. Of these, the largest and the most significant are the ruins of a late antique dual basilica and memorial

and residential building in Cim, a Mostar suburb. Archaeological studies have found evidence of an ancient settlement at the site of a later, 5th or 6th-century basilica. In addition to the aforementioned remains, researchers have also discovered a large number of tombs, pottery fragments with early Christian motifs of peacocks and fish and movable finds, which were unfortunately mostly lost during the last war. Reliquaries (two bone and two silver containers) containing the remains of the martyr and saint to whom the basilica was dedicated were found in the central apse. This is a rare example of an *in-situ* reliquary finding in a late antique basilica in B&H. Because it is located at the border between the coastal part of the Province of Dalmatia and its Hinterland, the Cim Basilica shows features of both Bosnian and

Dalmatian early Christian basilicas. In 2004, this oldest cultural monument in the Mostar area, considered by some researchers to have been the seat of the ancient Diocese of Seresenterum, was proclaimed the B&H Cultural Monument.

OLD BRIDGE

The slender stone bridge over the Neretva River was completed in 1566. Its construction was led by the Ottoman architect Mimar Hayruddin, a student of the great Ottoman architect Mimar Sinan. The construction supervisor was Hajji Mehmed Karadžić Bey, who was also in charge of the construction of the Mostar Mosque. There are numerous legends surrounding this symbol of Mostar,

World Heritage List of the highest category. The preserved documents from the time of construction show that the bridge was to be “one-eyed” (single arch), spanning the area between existing towers. Archaeological studies made possible by the unfortunate demolition of the bridge during the 1993 conflict revealed that the stone bridge was built on the site of an older wooden bridge, which is also mentioned in the archives. Already in the mid-15th century, there are references to the *Pons* (Bridge) settlement, while the famous Turkish travel writer of the 17th century, Kâtip Çelebi (Haji Khalifa), wrote that one crossed the bridge in mortal fear, as the bridge was hung from chains and shook violently when crossed. Hayruddin, however, reduced the span to be bridged

The Old Bridge is considered to be one of the most beautiful stone bridges in the world

and one of them says that Hayruddin did not dare to erect a bridge at that place until a local carpenter suggested a method for constructing a scaffold. The magnificent bridge was thus built, and two contradictory legends speak of Hayruddin’s level of confidence in his work: according to one, the architect left before the scaffolding was removed because he did not have the heart to watch if the bridge would remain standing or not — his fear was compounded by the Sultan’s threat of a beheading in case of failure — while in another he stood under the bridge for three days and three nights to prove his level of confidence in the quality and strength of the bridge.

The Old Bridge is considered to be one of the most beautiful stone bridges in the world, as confirmed by its listing on the UNESCO

with a wooden scaffold by constructing new side banks and eventually built a bridge whose arch diameter was 39 mimar arshins, or 29.55 m (arshin was the basic measuring unit of the Ottoman Empire; one mimar arshin was 75.77 cm). The construction of such a slender and tall bridge was an exceptional architectural endeavor of its time, which was not without difficulties caused by an unstable scaffolding, which, due to the heavy flow of the river, could not be erected on the river bed but only on the lowest beams. The problems with the stability of the scaffold are evidenced by certain irregularities in the construction of the original bridge; however, given the fact that constructing a wooden scaffold of this scale would cause headache even for modern architects, the Old Bridge is a masterpiece of the bridge construction of its time, as well as ours.



The remains of a late antique basilica in Cim

The bridge's exceptionally slender stone arch (at the narrowest, it is 0.8 m thick and 3.95 m wide) has a span of 30 meters and is composed of 111 rows of stone blocks connected by metal staples and spikes. The bridge was made from the Tenelija stone, a type of stone freshly quarried from the Mukoša quarry (5 km south of Mostar) which has very low density and may be cut even with a hand saw. Over time, the stone gains considerable strength, so structures built from this stone (except the Old Bridge, it was also used to build Karađoz Bey's Mosque and the Crooked Bridge in Mostar) have resisted the tooth of time for hundreds of years. Unfortunately, these monuments did not survive direct hits during the last war

— the mosque was badly damaged and the bridge was completely demolished (1993). During the reconstruction of the bridge from 2002 to 2004, builders used detailed photogrammetric recordings of the bridge from 1982 and some of the preserved stone blocks from the destroyed bridge were used for its reconstruction using traditional building techniques of the 16th century, as well as new Tenelija block duplicated harvested from the same quarry.

In addition to the large number of tourists who visit the Old Bridge every day, large crowds gather on the Neretva shores in July to watch the performances of brave divers who jump off the bridge. The tradition of



View of the old town

jumping off the bridge is reportedly as old as the bridge itself, with the first jump recorded in 1664. An official competition was launched in 1968, and there are two jump disciplines — head-first and feet-first, scored by an expert jury. The centuries-old tradition of jumping off the old bridge justifies the efforts of the organizers of this event to get it on the UNESCO List of Intangible Cultural Heritage. Jumping off the Old Bridge has garnered attention of the general public following the Red Bull Cliff Diving World Cup, whose one stage has been held at this historic site for five years in a row.

The Old Bridge was built between older towers: Tara and Herceguša on the east

and Halebija on the west coast, around which settlements developed. The Tara Tower is semi-circular and incorporated into a hexagonal fort, and was built in the mid-15th century by the noblemen Radin, and probably modeled on the slightly older Dubrovnik fort. The tower was elevated before 1566 and a staff quarter was built inside the fort. The Herceguša Tower was built during the reign of Grand Duke Stjepan Vukčić Kosača (1522). During the constructions that followed (before 1690), the Tara Tower was elevated with a new stone crown, and the side walls of the fort were reinforced from the inside. During the Ottoman Empire, the Tara Tower was used as an ammunition depot and today it houses

the Old Bridge Museum, a department of the Herzegovina Museum dedicated to the history of the city of Mostar and the reconstruction of the Old Bridge after its destruction in 1993. Part of the museum's exhibit is an archeological site located below the level of the tower entrance, where visitors can see the remains of two wooden bridges that preceded the stone one, as well as the foundations of the Old Bridge. In addition, archaeological findings found under the tower are also kept in this part of the museum.

The free-standing Halebija Tower was built in the mid-15th century and its floor plan is almost identical to that of Tara, which testifies to the simultaneous development of designed Renaissance forts on the two river banks. Halebija has undergone many reconstructions: between 1452 and 1566 it was elevated with a wooden crown, during the Cretan Wars (1645–1660) it received a stone crown with merlons and loopholes, and soon after that, under the order of Captain Halebija, it was transformed into a covered karaula with the living quarters opened by a series of windows on the

highest floors. The lower parts of the free-standing semi-circular Halebia Tower were used as a prison as well as an observation post.

KOSKI MEHMEND PASHA'S MOSQUE

This mosque is one of the most valuable monuments in Mostar, and is the only domed Mostar mosque, along with the Karađoz Bey Mosque and Nesuh-Aga Vučijaković Mosque. A stone minaret leans against the square mosque, and in front of the building there is a porch vaulted by three domes. There are stone sofas on either side of the entrance to the mosque, and in front of the porch there is a retrofitted external wooden porch (*hayat*), resting on 14 wooden columns. In the courtyard in front of the porch there is a *shadirvan* (fountain); this and the fountain in front of the Karađoz Bey Madrasa are the only preserved fountains out of the five Mostar fountains. The fourteen-sided minaret is 29.90 m tall and 78 stone steps lead to its top. The local Tenelija stone was used to build the mosque and minaret as well as the nearby

Old Bridge. The interior is dominated by a massive mihrab made in the form of a high portal, with a stone minbar. The mosque is illuminated through 25 windows arranged in several levels, and the walls are decorated with classic Ottoman ornamental paintings of the 16th and 17th centuries.

OLD ORTHODOX CHURCH OF THE NATIVITY OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

The modern church was built over an older church, as evidenced by the priestly graves from the late 17th century buried in nearby cemeteries. The Orthodox community developed significantly in the 18th century, and the first clergy memorial of Mostar dates from the beginning of this century. Serbs received a ferman to reconstruct the existing church as a reward for fighting on the Sultan's side in the war against Bosnian beys. Despite the rebellions of Mostar Muslims against the new "huge church" at the top of the hill, it was completed in 1834. The church is a typical Herzegovinian Orthodox church with a rectangular floor plan and a semicircular apse and a

characteristic bell tower. The church has a valuable collection of icons of Venetian, Greek/Cretan and local origin, the oldest of which date back to the 15th century.

The area of Mostar and its surroundings are rich in cultural monuments, as evidenced by the fact that as many as 46 buildings, monuments, archeological zones, urban and natural landscapes are included in the List of National Monuments of Bosnia and Herzegovina due to their cultural, historical or other significance. The Old Town area around the Old Bridge is recorded on the UNESCO World Heritage List. In addition to those described, there are other sites that are worth a visit, such as the Franciscan monastery complex (1894) with a famous library containing 50,000 volumes, as well as a collection of works by Italian masters of the 16th and 17th centuries; Ottoman houses such as the Bišćević House (17th century), fenced by a high wall and oriented towards the inner courtyard; the Kunjundžiluk and the Karađoz Bey Mosque (1557), the most monumental mosque in Herzegovina and the only preserved Mostar work of the great Kodža Mimar Sinan.



Podgorica at night

Podgorica

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

Podgorica is a city on five rivers, surrounded by three lakes; the Ribnica, Morača, Cijevna, Zeta and Sitnica are the rivers that flow through the city, and Skadar, Bukumir and Rikavac are the nearby lakes. The fertile soil near these rivers has attracted settlers from prehistoric times, as confirmed by the finds of archaeological remains from the Middle Paleolithic. This area was once settled by Illyrian tribes known as the Labeates and Docleates. The Labeates dwelt on a plain to the south of what is today Podgorica up to Lake Skadar and Docleates has their settlements in the area to the west of the Morača River. After the Romans conquered the area, the most

important fortification of the Docleates, at the mouth of the Zeta where it debouches into the Morača, developed into the city of Doclea. The ancient Doclea (or Duklja, in Montenegrin) had between 8 and 10 thousand inhabitants; it was destroyed by the Goths in 602 CE. A medieval city grew along the ruins of ancient Doclea – the name Podgorica was first mentioned in 1326. This settlement was an important trade center and trade route between the Republic of Ragusa and Serbia. As was the fate of most Balkans nations, in the fifteenth century, Podgorica was occupied by the Ottomans: Medun was conquered in 1455 and Podgorica in 1474. The new government stimulated the development of a new center on the foundations of the medieval town of Ribnica. The Ottomans built a triangular fortification to use as an ammunition depot;

the settlement rose to the south of the fort, on the location of what is today Stara Varoš. This part of the settlement consisted of a few hundreds of small residential buildings – the only monumental buildings that overlooked the town were the Skender Chaush Mosque and the Clock Tower (Sahat kula). The Hajji Pasha's stone bridge over Ribnica is the most impressive Ottoman public building that still stands today, located in the northern part of Stara Varoš. In 1878, Podgorica was finally free from the Ottoman rule and united with Montenegro; a rapid population growth followed. The new housing needs gave rise to urban planning and the construction of even rectangular city blocks designed according to a spatial plan by the Austrian architect Vorman. The twentieth century brought with it the most widespread devastation in Podgorica's history since the collapse of ancient Doclea: during World War II, the city was bombed more than 70 times and razed to the ground. It was liberated in 1944 and post-war renovations started two years later.

SITE DESCRIPTION AND TOURIST CONTENT

The Roman settlement of Doclea (Duklja) is the most important ancient site in Montenegro, located on an irregular plateau surrounded by the rivers Zeta, Morača and Šarlija, near modern-day Podgorica. Doclea was founded at the beginning of the first century CE and named after the Docleates, an Illyrian tribe that inhabited the area. The Medun Monument Complex, 12 km to the northeast of Podgorica, encompasses the ruins of the Illyrian settlement called Meteon, the 18th century Church of St. Nicholas and the birthplace of Marko Miljanov, a 19th century chieftain, statesman and poet.

After the Ottoman conquest of Podgorica (1474), a medieval settlement arose to the south of a newly-built fort – Stara Varoš – of which only the 17th-century Skender Chaush Mosque and the Clock Tower (Sahat kula) remain today. Sastavci is a popular gathering spot for youth as well as somewhat older inhabitants of Podgorica, who seek out this idyllic verdant space on hot summer days to find refreshment near the cool water of its river. The castle of the Montenegrin ruling dynasty Petrović is located in Kruševac, the largest park in Podgorica, situated on the bank of the Morača. The castle was built in 1891 as the Petrović dynasty residence; King Nicholas's Court, the "Perjanički dom" building, the court chapel and outbuildings were refurbished in 1984 and are now being used as art galleries.

Podgorica's sacral buildings date from its earlier history. Due to a peculiar historical situation in the area, here one may find holy places belonging to three major global religions: Orthodox Christianity, Catholicism and Islam. The construction of the Cathedral of the Resurrection of Christ in Podgorica started in 1993 and lasted for no less than twenty years. With its monumental size, this building dominates the square it looms over. The art pieces in the church's interior are especially valuable – the church is said to be one of the most intriguing as well as one of the largest stone sculpture (bas-relief) galleries inside of a sacral building. Churches and monasteries in the center of Podgorica and its suburbs are a testimony to the long history of spirituality in this area; the most notable monasteries are the Ćelija Piperska, Duga Moračka and Dajbabe. The Orthodox Church of St. George sits at the foot of the Gorica Hill; its original architectural design is now partially hidden by subsequent additions, but its



Doclea's Archaeological Remains

origins can be traced back to the Middle Ages, between the 9th and 11th centuries. The construction of the Catholic Church of the Holy Name of Jesus started in 1963 and ended three years later. It is a remarkable work of contemporary architecture in the former Yugoslavia. Designed by Croatian architects Zvonimir Vrkljan and Boris Krstulović, the church was a novelty not only in the field of sacral architecture but also of Yugoslavian architectural production of its time. The Skender Chaush Mosque and the near-by tekke were built by Skender Chaush in the late 15th century, when this was the only mosque in Stara Varoš other than the one inside the fort. Hajji Mehmed Pasha

Osmanagić built the Osmanagić Mosque at the end of the 18th century, and in the courtyard of the mosque, there is his tomb.

ANCIENT DOCLEA

The Roman settlement of Doclea (Duklja) is the most important ancient site in Montenegro, located on an irregular plateau surrounded by the rivers Zeta, Morača and Šarlija, near modern-day Podgorica. Although rivers acted as a safeguard for the majority of the year, the settlement was nevertheless fortified with strong ramparts, towers and bastions, with walls up to 2.5 m thick. Doclea was founded at the very



View of the old town

beginning of the first century (around the year 9) and named after the Illyrian tribe known as the Docleates, who were settled in the area before the arrival of the Romans.

Doclea's urban planning was classically Roman, with side streets running parallel to the two perpendicular main streets (*cardo* and *decumanus*) and thus forming rectangular city blocks. The town square (*forum*) and its capitol temple stood near the intersection of the two main streets. Archaeological surveys have unearthed a triumphal arch dedicated to Emperor Gallien near the western entrance to the city, temples dedicated to the goddesses

Roma and Diana, and, closer to the city center, the city baths. The complex was modeled on Roman rules of urban planning and comprised areas such as *palestra*, cloak rooms, *tepidarium*, *caldarium*, a library and rest rooms. Luxurious floor mosaics and sculptures that adorned the interiors of buildings in the city are a testimony to the splendor of the baths as well as the entire city. The main town square — the Forum — faced the baths and was closed off in the west by a colonnade on the lateral facade of the basilica and by porches in the three remaining sides. Doclea had a water supply system in the form of an aqueduct that supplied water from the Cijevna River some 16 kilometers away.



Clock tower

In the 4th century, Christians settled in the eastern quarter of the city and built there their churches and a large Episcopal basilica. In addition to the ruins, some movable archeological material was also preserved from this period, including the world-renowned Podgorica glass and a glass plate decorated with motifs from the Old and New Testaments, which is being kept in the State Hermitage Museum in Russia. Other finds, mainly parts of grave inventory, such as pottery and glassware, pieces of jewelry, tools, weapons and money, are part of the permanent exhibition at the City Museum. The Gothic raids in 490 and a devastating earthquake in 518 were the causes of Doclea's gradual collapse.

MEDUN

The Medun Monument Complex lies 12 km to the northeast of Podgorica and consists of the ruins of the Illyrian town of Meteon, the church of St. Nicholas and the birthplace of Marko Miljanov, a 19th century chieftain, statesman and poet.

Ruins of an Illyrian fortress and a later Ottoman fortress sit on a difficult-to-reach saddle crossing in the middle of the Medun Plain. The Illyrian Meteon was founded in the late 4th or early 3rd century BCE as one of the strongholds of the Labeates tribe. Due to its naturally sheltered position, the city was secured by a wall with towers only

in the north. An acropolis stood on the eastern side of the complex, with a suburb in the west, separated from the city by a massive wall. However, the only remains from the Illyrian period visible today are the so-called Cyclopean walls; there are also the ruins of a medieval Ottoman fort with angular towers.

The remains of the medieval fortress encompass the church of St. Nicholas, which is said to have been built on the foundations of an older church with money brought in from Russia by Duke Radonja Petrović. The interior of the small single-nave church is embellished with a painted metal iconostasis; Marko Miljanov and his wife Stefa are buried in front of the church.

The birthplace of Duke Marko Miljanov,

Today, the birthplace of Marko Miljanov houses a museum with a historical (showing the most important moments of Miljanov's life), a literary (displaying his works) and an ethnographic exhibition (where visitors can see traditional household objects of this area).

STARA VAROŠ AND THE CLOCK TOWER (SAHAT KULA)

The Ottoman conquest of Podgorica in 1474 marked a new era of its development, transforming Podgorica into an urban center. The medieval settlement arose to the south of the triangular Ribnica Fort and its pedestrian and trade routes sprang up organically around new facilities, without any sort of planning. For a long time, the fort (its Ottoman name was *Depedogen*, "Under the

"Humanity is to defend another from oneself and bravery is to defend oneself from another" – Marko Miljanov

one of the most significant characters in Montenegrin history, faces the front of the church of St. Nicholas. Marko Miljanov was a peasant and an Ottoman war veteran who was given the title of Duke by Prince Nicholas and became the mayor of Podgorica in 1878. However, he soon returned to his home village, where he learned to read and write despite of what was at the time an advanced age of 50. He produced several important works, the most important being the "Examples of Humanity and Bravery", a collection of anecdotes promoting the ideal of well-doing. Miljanov wrote: "Humanity is to defend another from oneself and bravery is to defend oneself from another;" extolling the human and noble face of the enemy was one of the main messages of Miljan's work.

Hill") was used as an ammunition depot; in 1878, it was badly damaged in an explosion caused by a lightning strike. Although of a later origin, the Orthodox tradition states that the founder of the Nemanjić royal dynasty, Stefan Nemanja, was born inside the fort, which is still often referred as the Nemanjić Town. Access to the Morača River from Stara Varoš was guarded by wooden palisades and the settlement had no public buildings, only a few hundred small residential complexes. The only buildings dominating the vertical plane of the settlement were the 15th century Skender Chaush Mosque (Doganjska Mosque) and the Clock Tower (Sahat kula) from the 17th century. These two monuments, together with the Hajji Pasha Bridge, still testify to the Ottoman past of the center of Podgorica.



The Sastavci Bridge

SASTAVCI

Sastavci is a popular gathering spot for youth as well as somewhat older inhabitants of Podgorica, who seek out this idyllic verdant space on hot summer days to find refreshment near the cool water of its river. The Sastavci Bridge, also known as the Hajji Pasha Bridge, was thoroughly renovated in the 18th century by Hajji Pasha, a distinguished townsman of Podgorica, and is thought to date back to the Roman times. The Roman city Birziminium is thought to have been built at the mouth of the Ribnica where it debouches into the Morača, as a stop on a Roman road leading from Naron

(near Metković) to Skadar (Skadar). The several meters-tall bridge has a single arch and is made from river stones.

THE KRUŠEVAC COURT COMPLEX

The castle of the Montenegrin ruling dynasty Petrović is located in Kruševac, the largest park in Podgorica, situated on the bank of the Morača. The castle was built in 1891 as the Petrović dynasty residence; King Nicholas's Court, the "Perjanički dom" building, the court chapel and outbuildings were refurbished in 1984 and are now being used as art galleries. The following year, these galleries became



The Kruševac Court Complex

part of the Contemporary Arts Center and today exhibit more than 1000 works from 60 non-aligned countries, making this site an indispensable destination for every fan of contemporary art.

CHURCHES, MONASTERIES AND MOSQUES

The construction of the Cathedral of the Resurrection of Christ in Podgorica started in 1993 and lasted for no less than twenty years. With its monumental size, this building dominates the square it looms over. The art pieces in the church's interior are especially valuable — the church is said to be one of

the most intriguing as well as one of the largest stone sculpture (bas-relief) galleries inside of a sacral building. The motifs on these works are the Montenegrin Christian heritage spanning from the early Christian period up to the present, including elements of the artistic heritage of early Christian shrines in the Holy Land, the Holy Mountain, Byzantium, medieval Serbian endowments, etc. The interior of the church is embellished with frescoes on a golden backdrop covering 6200 m², painted by several academic painters as well as monks. In addition to the frescoes, the church is adorned with 1961 m² of mosaics, which is the largest area covered in mosaics in Montenegro. The unusually



The Cathedral of the Resurrection of Christ

large central polyeleos (the biggest in European Orthodox temples) contributes to the mystical atmosphere of the temple, with fourteen smaller polyelei set around it. The total area of the Temple's interior is 4000 m², making it the third largest Orthodox church in the world, after the Cathedral of Christ the Savior in Moscow and the Church of Saint Sava in Belgrade.

Churches and monasteries erected in the center and around Podgorica testify to the long history of spirituality in the area. The Ćelija Piperska Monastery was founded in the mid-seventeenth century, 17 kilometers from the center of Podgorica. It was founded

by St. Stephen of Piperi, who built a small church in a village called Gornji Crnci in Piperi around 1660, while on the run from the Ottomans. His relics were laid there after his death.

The Duga Moračka Monastery stands 17 km away from Podgorica, in the Morača River canyon. The original location of the monastery was some 10 kilometers further down the river, at the mouth of a small tributary of Morača, but due to the constant threat of Ottoman raids in 1752, it was moved to a more secluded location. The church was erected in 1755 on the site of an older building and closely resembles 18th



The Ćelija Piperska Monastery

and 19th century rural temples: it is a single-nave church with a semicircular apse and a bell-gable, made of evenly cut stone. The whole interior of the temple was covered with frescoes from the second half of the 18th century, of which only those in the vault remain today. The monastery was a center of learning, and although it never housed a large number of monks, it was active until 1942. A devastating earthquake in 1979 put a stop to the serving of the liturgy in the monastery's Church of the Assumption of the Virgin for twenty years; however, a mass was served there for the restoration of the monastery in 1996. The following year, this monastery, like the Ćelija Piperska

Monastery, became a female monastery.

The Dajbabe Monastery is located near Podgorica, in the village of the same name, and is dedicated to the Assumption of the Virgin. It was founded in 1897; at a glance, the architecture of its church is unremarkable; however, it is of interest due to the utilization of a natural cave as the interior of the church — the only part of the church that is not underground is its spacious entrance porch with a bell tower on each side. The legend of the founding of the monastery tells the story of a miraculous apparition of a saint from Saint Sava's time to a boy named Petko,



The church of the Duga Moračka Monastery

who as instructed to build a church in that holy place. The boy retold his visions to the Ostrog monk Simeon Popović, who transformed the natural cave into a church and also built a small hut and a lodge in its yard. Simeon painted the frescoes in the interior of the cave following the natural formation of its rock; this makes the visit to the Dajbabe Church a special experience for every believer and visitor.

The Orthodox Church of St. George sits at the foot of the Gorica Hill; its original architectural design is now partially hidden by subsequent additions, but its origins can be traced back to the Middle Ages, between the 9th and 11th centuries. As the sacral buildings of medieval Raška were strongly influenced by the Littoral architecture, the Church of St. George exhibits certain similarities with early Croatian churches in



The Dajbabe Monastery

Dalmatia, especially the church of St. Peter in Priko near Omiš. The Church of St. George is an elongated building with a dome above the central part, and unlike Dalmatian churches, the transition to the central protrusion with the dome is accentuated with short overhangs on the side facades. The church has undergone significant upgrades; in 1880, a bell tower was added to the church and subsequently removed in 1931, when the

entire church was covered in a thick layer of concrete reinforced by stone slabs, allegedly due to cracks in the vault. The interior of the church is embellished with frescoes by an unknown artist. In its southwestern part, there is a small recess lined with ancient fragments from nearby Doclea.

The construction of the Catholic Church of the Holy Name of Jesus started in 1963 and



The Church of St. George

ended three years later. It is a remarkable work of contemporary architecture in the former Yugoslavia. Designed by Croatian architects Zvonimir Vrkljan and Boris Krstulović, the church was a novelty not only in the field of sacral architecture but also of Yugoslavian architectural production of its time. The authors sought to create a special space, different from all other buildings visited by the believer in their everyday life. According to its architect, the rough reinforced concrete form of its walls “with its hideousness, reminds one of the first inferior Christian buildings (those secret as well as public), as an expression of the negation of earthly garishness.” With

its rough concrete form, the Podgorica Church is a work of brutalism, an art style that peeked between 1954 and 1970. It is, therefore, one of the most representative works of modern architecture in the former Yugoslavian state.

SKENDER CHAUSH MOSQUE (STARODOGANJSKA MOSQUE)

The Skender Chaush Mosque and the nearby tekke were built by Skender Chaush in the late 15th century, when this was the only mosque in Stara Varoš other than the one inside the fort. The mosque was to be maintained from the waqf left by its



The Skender Chaush Mosque



The Church of the Holy Name of Jesus

founder; however, with the decay of estates he left as his waqf, the maintenance of the mosque was taken over by merchants. Its second name dates from this time. Due to repeated renovations, the mosque has not retained its original appearance. Its present form is mainly a consequence of renovations carried out in 1927 as well as those following a devastating earthquake in 1979.

The Osmanagić Mosque was built by Hajji Mehmed Pasha Osmanagić at the end of the 18th century. The mosque was heavily damaged in a bombing during World War II and was in ruins until 1997, when it was thoroughly rebuilt.

NATURAL HERITAGE

The five rivers flowing through Podgorica, its three lakes as well as the massifs that surround it are reason enough for every outdoor enthusiast to visit this area. The Morača River is one of the symbols of Podgorica and the largest river flowing through this city. Its source is located in the north of the country; it is 113 km long and feeds into Lake Skadar. The Morača is a relatively small and shallow river (about 100 m wide) and its canyon has long been part of the main trade route between the country north and Podgorica, as well as the coast. To the north of Podgorica, the



Lake Skadar

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Morača meets with its largest tributary, the Zeta, which gave its name to the entire valley. According to locals, the Zeta was once called the Virovstak, like a nearby mountain. The river is 86 km long, with an abundant hydrological network at its source: the river springs from the water that accumulates on the Gornje polje plain near Nikšić, a 9 km² lowland surrounded from all sides by

mountains. The power of the Zeta's stream is harnessed by three hydropower plants, which have unfortunately had an adverse effect on the flora and fauna of the river. The Zeta is an important habitat of the endemic softmouth trout (*Salmo obtusirostris*), the only Montenegrin fish species under legal protection until 2006. In 2011, the estimated number of softmouth trout in the Zeta was



less than a 1000. The trout inhabits areas surrounding the plentiful karst springs in the river bed, which enable it to survive in the heat of summer. The Cijevna is the left tributary of the Morača and a favorite picnic spot for the people of Podgorica during hot summer days. Its picturesque canyon lies only 4 km away from the city center; its special attraction is the popular

“Niagara”, a waterfall near the Rakić House. This 10 m tall waterfall loses its intensity in the summer and is a favorite swimming spot for many picnickers.

Lake Skadar lies near Podgorica; it is the largest Balkans lake and the jewel of this area, widely renowned not only for its beauty and well-preserved nature but also



The Čemovsko polje Vineyards

as a spiritual and cultural center. Due to its exceptional value, this area was designated as a national park in 1983, an internationally Important Bird and Biodiversity Area in 1989, and was listed on the World List of Wetlands of International Importance in 1995; it also includes three special nature reserves. The Skadar Lake National Park is mainly comprised of aquatic and wetland ecosystems that are exceptionally abundant in flora and fauna, especially birds. The symbol of Lake Skadar is the Dalmatian pelican, a phenomenon in this part of Europe, who feeds on the abundance of 48 fish species that inhabit the lake. There is also a large number of amphibians,

reptiles and mammals, including otters, in and around the lake. Visitors to the Lake Skadar National Park may visit some of the centuries-old churches and monasteries on its islands but also spend time enjoying the benefits of the outdoors: hiking and cycling trails, boat rides, fishing, bird watching, water sports, or simply lounge at the beach to experience all this paradise has to offer.

The Podgorica area offers various opportunities for an active holiday, including the Gorica – Malo brdo – Doclea hiking trail (11.3 km) and the Žijovo mountaineering trail (8.5 km), suitable for more experienced hikers as it climbs to the top of the Surdup (2184 m above



Japraci

sea level) and Shield peaks (Štitan) (2172 m). The city has several equestrian clubs, which offer activities such as riding school, therapeutic riding, as well as horseback riding in the countryside. "A Circle around the Korito" is a fully marked panoramic route that starts in Podgorica and leads to the Kuči mountain region. The route is 65 km long, fully paved, equipped with several observation point and information boards and is suitable for day-long trips. Children can enjoy an adventure park on the Gorica Hill, which offers zip-lines, rock climbing and other platforms for sporting activities. Visitors who want to try free climbing may do so at the end of the Morača River Canyon,

which contains well-maintained routes for beginners as well as more advanced climbers.

GASTRONOMY

The cuisine of the central Montenegro has been influenced by foreign cuisines, such as Oriental (due to the Ottoman rule in the area), but the area also boasts various traditional dishes as well as produce. Meat is a culinary staple as animal husbandry is a centuries-old tradition of the Montenegrin population: the most commonly eaten meats are beef, lamb, veal, but also pork as well as fish. The abundance of lakes provides opportunities to fish carp, which may be fried, dried,

marinated, or eaten as a salad, or trout, which is usually fried and roasted – trout with cream cheese (kaymak) or sour milk is a specialty. The common bleak is a small fish that is indigenous in Lake Skadar, and may be fried fresh or smoked; smoked bleak may also be made into a salad.

Meat dishes commonly contain vegetables, but sometimes also fruits, such as the Podgorica carp with prunes. Potatoes are a common side dish and may be prepared in various ways. The traditional vegetable in the

of this wild medicinal plant, saved the population from starvation during the most difficult of times, as well as dried mutton in a crust. Honey is a traditional product of central Montenegro, as its well-preserved nature offers an abundance of opportunities for high-quality bee grazing. Wild pomegranate, cornel berry or plum jams are made at home, and plum jam is used not only as a spread but also as an ingredient in many sweet dishes, such as the traditional Podgorica *presukači*, a pastry filled with jam.

In the vicinity of the Skadar Lake one may find one of the most beautiful and largest vineyards in Europe – Ćemovsko polje

region is kale (*raštan*), an extremely healthy cultivar of cabbage that Montenegrins eat with dried meat, homemade sausages, cured goat or sheep meat, bacon, etc. A well-loved dish containing kale is the so-called “japraci”, or minced veal or beef rolls brought to Montenegro and Herzegovina by the Ottomans. A dish of more recent origin, but extremely popular in Montenegro, is Podgorica *popeci*, rolled fried pork steaks with cream cheese and prosciutto stuffing. This dish was created after World War II, and an interesting tidbit is that its creators are also known: they are the chefs from the Montenegro Hotel, Italian Giuglielmo Bafiattoni and Josip Balent..

A dish characteristic of this part of Montenegro is nettle soup with kaymak (cream cheese), which has, due to the omnipresence

In the vicinity of the Skadar Lake one may find one of the most beautiful and largest vineyards in Europe – Ćemovsko polje. Its rows of grapevines cover an area of 2310 hectares and mainly contain the two Montenegrin autochthonous grape varieties called Krstač and Vranac. The vineyard offers a guided tour, where visitors may enjoy a ride on a tourist train through the rows of vines and visit the wine cellars to sample first-class wines accompanied by an enologist. Kratošija is another grape variety grown in Montenegro that is traditionally mixed with Vranac and Lisičina. Čubrica and Žižak are also autochthonous Montenegrin varieties, and this abundance of wines and flavors is sure to satisfy the palate of even the most demanding wine enthusiasts.

CONCLUSION

The aim of the Ritour project is to valorize the cultural and natural heritage in the Morača, Jadro and Buna river basins and utilize these assets in the context of sustainable tourism. The results of this project in the Podgorica area are:

- 1.** Training of tourist guides specializing in the area of the capital with the aim of ensuring high level of personnel training;
- 2.** Procurement and installation of interactive screens summarizing the integrated tourist offer of the city at two locations in Podgorica;
- 3.** Refurbishing and equipping the archaeological site in Doclea with the aim of tourist valorization and presentation (clearing of a trail, installation of a protective fence, a fountain, info boards and an entry point on site, preparation and distribution of promotional material).
- 4.** Organization of the Regional Kayaking Regatta and additional affirmation of the city's water potential for the purpose of promoting active vacationing and sports tourism.
- 5.** Development of the Podgorica Tourism Development Strategy as the capital city, which is to provide a brand new direction for the future development of its tourism as well as the establishment of Podgorica as a tourist destination.

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