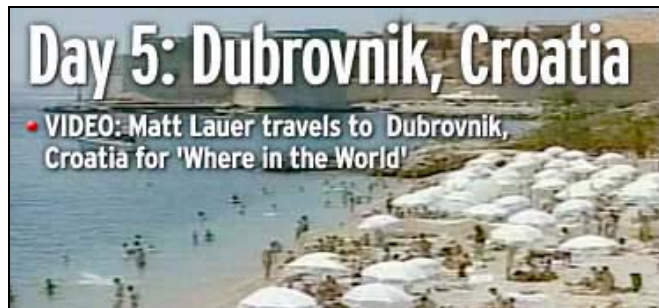




THIS WEEK...

- Croatian President Addresses UN Summit on Information Society in Tunis
- Prime Minister Sanader in France, Meets President Chirac
- U.S. Congress Supports Croatia's NATO Membership Bid
- EU Hails Croatia's Excellent Cooperation With OSCE
- More Financial Help to Minorities
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- New Croatian Consulate for Kansas and Missouri Officially Dedicated
- Croatia in U.S. Media: NBC Today Show - Where in the World is Matt Lauer - Dubrovnik
- Upcoming Events: *Klapa Sinj's* U.S. Tour
- CNN's *Play of the Day* Features Croatian NBA Player Zoran Planinić
- Anniversary: Croatia Marks 14th Year of Vukovar Tragedy

Touring the 'New Riviera'



"Today" show host Matt Lauer profiles Dubrovnik, Croatia, and the Dalmatian Coast, often called the "New Riviera." (Page 4)

Klapa Sinj's U.S. Tour 2005

Dec. 2 - New York
[New York Society for Ethical Culture]

Dec. 4 - Washington
[Kennedy Center]

Dec. 7 - Chicago
[Chicago Cultural Center]

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Congressman Dennis Moore (Kansas), Ambassador Neven Jurica, and Honorary Consul Dr. Judy Vogelsang during the celebration ceremony on the occasion of the opening of the new Croatian Consulate in Kansas and Missouri. (Page 4)



Prime Minister Sanader confirmed with French President Chirac the strengthening of political, economic and cultural relations between Croatia and France. (Page 2)



The Committee on International Relations of the U.S. Congress House of Representatives unanimously adopted a resolution recommending that Croatia be admitted into NATO as soon as possible. (Page 2, 3)

Croatian President Addresses UN Summit on Information Society in Tunis



UN Secretary General Kofi Annan speaks at the Summit on Information Society in Tunisia. [Photo: AFP]

TUNISIA, Tunis, Nov. 16 – Croatian President Stjepan Mesić participated in the UN Summit on Information Society in Tunisia. “Information is becoming the foundation of the authority, position and influence, the foundation of a threat to our civilization, but also the foundation of its defense. Information, namely its malignant from misinformation, is becoming a powerful weapon in the fight against political opponents, economic competition, but not against those of same views,” Mesić said. According to Mesić, every country has the right and obligation to defend itself and its citizens from global terrorism. A three-day summit on information society is the second phase of a summit held in Geneva two years ago. It pooled 50 Heads of State and prime ministers and more than 11,000 officials, and business managers from wealthy and poor countries so as to put in motion a UN initiative aimed at increasing access to modern telecommunications and the Internet in developing countries. The summit was also addressed by UN Secretary General Kofi Annan.

For more information about the UN Summit on Information Society, please visit:
<http://www.itu.int/ws/is/>

Sanader – Chirac Meeting Reaffirms Good Relations Between Croatia and France

PARIS, France, Nov. 15 – Croatian Prime Minister Ivo Sanader met French President Jacques Chirac in Paris for talks on Croatia’s progress towards EU membership and ways of promoting political and economic cooperation between the two countries. Prime Minister Sanader said that the meeting “reaffirmed the great progress in overall bilateral relations at the political and economic level.” France, which has continually supported Croatia on its path toward the EU, has decided to put at Croatia’s disposal, and at its own cost, one of its most experienced diplomats, Guy Legras, to act as an adviser to Croatia during its EU accession talks, the Prime Minister said. Sanader also said that Croatia wanted to complete the accession talks in time for elections for the European Parliament in 2009, which the French President supported. During the visit, Prime Minister Sanader also met with French Foreign Minister Philippe Douste-Blazy. “We support Croatian efforts to continue with its reforms,” Douste-Blazy said. “An increasing number of French companies are interested in investing in Croatia. Ties between Croatia and France exist and there is also a real friendship with the Prime Minister Sanader whom we in France particularly respect.



Croatian Prime Minister Ivo Sanader (left) with French President Jacques Chirac (right). During his visit to France, Prime Minister Sanader expressed satisfaction with the talks and acknowledged “great progress” in bilateral relations. [Photo: www.iskon.hr]

Note: The relations, particularly Croatia’s image in France, have been on a steady upward path for a couple of years now. France was one of the strongest advocates for the start of negotiations with Croatia. Around 60,000 French tourists visited Croatia this year, which is a full third more than last year. Most of them have returned home with positive impressions, which should direct an even greater number of tourists to the Croatian side of the Adriatic next year.

U.S. Congress Supports Croatian Admission to NATO



Croatia is taking necessary measures to achieve its major foreign policy goal, NATO accession, placing the country under the umbrella of collective security. [Photo: www.htnet.hr]

WASHINGTON, D.C., Nov. 16 – The Committee on International Relations of the U.S. Congress House of Representatives unanimously adopted a resolution recommending that Croatia be admitted into NATO as soon as possible in acknowledgment of the progress the country had made in meeting the membership criteria and significantly improving its cooperation with the Hague War Crimes Tribunal. The resolution was moved in early November by Congressman Elton Gallegly of California, who chairs the Subcommittee on Europe of the Committee on International Relations. The resolution was co-sponsored by congressmen George Radanovich and Peter Visclosky, who co-chaired the Congressional Croatian Caucus.

The document will now be sent to the House of Representatives, which is expected to discuss it next week. The draft resolution praises Croatia for progress in meeting the political, economic and military criteria for NATO membership and recommends that the country be invited to join NATO as a full member as soon as possible. Croatia is described in the resolution as a reliable partner of the U.S. and a country contributing to the stabilization of Southeastern Europe.

Since it gained independence, Croatia has made significant progress in the strengthening of democratic institutions, respect for human rights and the rule of the law. It has contributed to the fight against global terrorism and met the criteria from NATO's Membership Action Plan, as well as constructively participated in the U.S.-Adriatic Charter, reads the resolution. Croatia is also commended for having significantly improved its cooperation with the UN war crimes tribunal in the Hague and encouraged to take steps to locate the remaining fugitive indictee, General Ante Gotovina, and transfer him to The Hague.

EU Hails Croatia's Excellent Cooperation With OSCE



Foreign Minister Kolinda Grabar-Kitarović was commended by the EU for her work in achieving Croatia's progress. [Photo: Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration]

BRUSSELS, Belgium, Nov. 15 – The European Union highly values the excellent cooperation between the OSCE Mission in Croatia and the host country. The OSCE Mission in Croatia serves as a model of effective support along the path to democratic conditions, said a statement published on the web site of the UK Presidency.

In the statement, the EU welcomed the participation of the Croatian Foreign Affairs and European Integration Minister, Kolinda Grabar-Kitarović, in an extraordinary session of the OSCE Council in Vienna. Minister Grabar-Kitarović informed members of the Permanent Committee of Croatia's progress in meeting international conditions from the mandate of the OSCE Mission, as well as of the return of refugees, carrying out of reforms and regional cooperation. "We recognize and welcome the progress achieved by Croatia in several areas, in particular visible progress in regional cooperation and reconciliation as well as the adoption of Constitutional Law on the Rights of National Minorities, the

further implementation of which we strongly encourage," the statement read.

For full EU statement on Croatia's cooperation with the OSCE, please log on to:

<http://www.eu2005.gov.uk/servlet/Front?pagename=OpenMarket/Xcelerate/ShowPage&c=Page&cid=1107293561746&a=KArticle&aid=1131975024691>

Also, on Nov. 17, during the regular session of the OSCE Permanent Council in Vienna, the Head of the OSCE Mission to Croatia, Jorge Fuentes Monzonis Vilallonga, has described the cooperation with Croatian authorities as exceptional; stressing that Croatia has lately made serious progress in refugee return, judicial reform and other important areas. Speaking about Croatia's progress, Fuentes said Croatia deserves a special position among all countries where the OSCE had missions because it was taking great steps in the building of democracy, its economic situation was good, it was one of the most important European tourist destinations, and it had started EU entry talks.

For full press release "OSCE Mission Welcomes Croatia Maturing Democracy", please visit:

http://www.osce.org/croatia/item_1_16997.html

Croatia Finances the Education of Ethnic Minorities

ZAGREB, Croatia, Nov. 14 – Croatia will finance the education of ethnic minorities with 4 million kuna this year. This is about 50% more than Croatia spent for this purpose in the past two years. The greatest amount of money (1.7 million kn) will be given to the Serb minority, which is twice as much as the Serb community received last year. The Italian minority will receive the same amount as in 2004 (900,000 kn). The amount for the education of the Roma has been halved to 409,000 kn. However, they will receive an additional 500,000 kn within the National Program for Roma, evening things out. Hungarians, Czechs, Ukrainians (together with Ruthenians) should receive around 250,000 kn each. The Montenegrin minority was granted 120,000 kn while the smallest amount for education (just 20,000 kn) was allotted to the Albanian community.

Investments in Infrastructure

ZAGREB, Croatia, Nov. 11 – Investment in the transport infrastructure remains a priority for the Croatian Government. Only a day after opening work on the bridge that is to connect the mainland with the Pelješac Peninsula in Southern Dalmatia, Prime Minister Ivo Sanader announced that within the next four months, construction of the Zagreb-Sisak motorway would commence. The motorway will cost HRK 1.5 billion. The route by which the motorway will enter the southern perimeter of Zagreb has so far been a problem, but a solution is in the works. What is important is that the motorway will bypass the current road that runs from the airport to the center of Zagreb, which will not only ease traffic but will also coincide with the investment that is being planned for the International Airport at Pleso. Namely, the State, together with the City of Zagreb, will be putting aside EUR 180 million for the construction of a new airport terminal.

New Croatian Consulate for Kansas and Missouri Officially Launched



Croatian Ambassador Neven Jurica speaks at the opening of the Croatian Consulate in Kansas City. [Photo: Embassy of Croatia]

KANSAS CITY, KS, Oct. 1 – The Croatian-American communities in Kansas and Missouri are to finally receive some representation closer to home in the form of a new consulate in Kansas City, which was officially dedicated on Oct. 1 by the Croatian Ambassador to the United States, Neven Jurica. Ambassador Jurica was joined by Consul General Petar Ljubičić of New York, Consul General Marica Matković of Chicago and Consul General Sanja Bujas Juraga of Los Angeles. Local dignitaries, as well as members of the Croatian-American communities of both Kansas and Kansas City, Missouri, were also in attendance.



Ambassador Jurica (center) along with the Croatian Honorary Consul Dr. Judy Vogelsang (second from left) and members of the local Croatian community. [Photo: Embassy of Croatia]

During the dedication ceremony, Ambassador Jurica announced the appointment of Dr. Judith Vogelsang as Honorary Consul. Dr. Vogelsang, a physician, is well known in the Croatian community for her role in coordinating the shipment of food and medical relief during the war in Croatia in the early 1990's, as well as promoting Croatian culture and interests in Kansas and Missouri. The Kansas City Area is home to a large Croatian-American population. As in other major cities throughout the U.S., they contributed to the building of the Greater Kansas City area in many ways. There are currently close to 40,000 Croatian-Americans living in the area, and the consulate hopes to serve as a bridge to promote business, cultural and educational exchanges between Croatia and the U.S., for years to come.

NBC's Today Show in Croatia

NEW YORK, N.Y./Dubrovnik, Croatia, Nov. 11 - "Man, is that pretty!" On Friday, November 11th, 2005, NBC's Today Show broadcast a part of its morning news program from Dubrovnik, Croatia, with co-anchor Matt Lauer exclaiming these words while overlooking the ancient walled city - Dubrovnik.

During this portion of the Today Show, entitled "Where in the World is Matt Lauer," Dubrovnik and the Dalmatian Coast, the so-called "New Riviera," were profiled, including local attractions, natural and cultural heritage, cuisine, and experience of investors in Croatia. Renowned for providing its U.S. audience with domestic news since 1952, but also for acting as a unique "window to the world," the show acquainted 20 million U.S. viewers with aspects of Croatia that have made it a popular tourist destination, but also noted interesting facts such as, for instance, the fact that the ubiquitous neck tie originates from Croatia and that the ballpoint pen was invented in the Croatian capital of Zagreb. Cultural heritage, the rugged, craggy beauty of the coastline and aqua blue waters are the reason why tourists come to Dubrovnik, but one New York family featured in the live broadcast which was attracted by beauty decided to move permanently to Dubrovnik for a more practical reason: "We moved here to work for the American College of Management and Technology, which is part of the Rochester Institute of Technology in Rochester, NY. We love it. People are great and the place is full of history and beauty." This family is just one example of the ever-growing ties between Croatia and the United States and proof that Dubrovnik is one place that just never is too far away.



Hollywood star Goran Višnjić, in Dubrovnik during the filming of the live broadcast, and Matt Lauer (not pictured) met on Široka Street, from which they strolled together down to Stradun, Dubrovnik's main promenade. Višnjić told his American guest stories from when the city was under siege by Yugoslav troops, in the early 1990's. [Photo: Večernji list]

For video of the broadcast, please visit:
<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/3041544/>

Want to take your own global adventure like the "Today" Show's Matt Lauer did during his "Where in the World" tour? "Today" travel editor Peter Greenberg discusses some cool and easy ways you can plan for your very own trip to Dubrovnik.

Please visit the link below for helpful tourist information:
<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/10003888/>

Croatian *Klapa* Introduced to the World

Croatia's Dalmatian coast, newly discovered as a hot tourist destination due to its breathtaking beauty, is poised to give up another of its sublime secrets - the soaring a cappella sounds of *Klapa*. Classically trained composer and rock musician Nenad Bach, a Croatian now living in the United States, has produced two new CDs featuring *Klapa Sinj*, with its traditional all male lineup of singers, and the female *Klapa Fa Lindjo*. "It will stop your brain," Bach promises. "In a cluttered world, this is a pure sound that calms."

The CDs, recorded in lush surround sound, reflect a 600-year old folk custom which found small groups of men gathering to give voice to the human stories of love, loss and longing, serenading a beloved on a balcony, singing their hearts out in the stone alleys and cathedrals of this region. The form has evolved over the years to become the sophisticated and finely layered sound that it is today, performed by amateurs for the sheer joy of it. Engineer John Holbrook, a five time Grammy Award winner, describes the celestial sound as "soul cleansing." Cover art by noted Croatian graphic designer Andrej Urem is sumptuously true to the Adriatic landscape of water and sky. Both CD's are accompanied by a 32-page booklet which is translated into seven languages, perfectly representative of the universality of the music.



Klapa Sinj's latest album "Lipo Ime" contains more than an hour and a half of beautiful music, which has yet to be discovered by the U.S. audience. [The stunningly beautiful artwork of the cover of the album is done by Croatian designer Andrej Urem]

The Croatian Chronicle notes that 'the unity of the voices and the technical quality on the recordings are unmatched.' "It is my constant desire to awaken the modern ear with these ancient vibrations," Bach says. 'I think it's extraordinary on many levels...sonically, visually, textually, conceptually. It's like ultimate art, and it's undeniable. Let's see what audiences say.'

Klapa Sinj will perform for the first time in the United States this year, with appearances slated for the World Music Institute in New York City on December 2nd, [www.nysec.org], [www.worldmusicinstitute.org], Washington DC's Kennedy Center on December 4th, [www.kennedycenter.com] and the Chicago Cultural Center's Preston Bradley Hall on December 7th. [www.cityofchicago.org/CulturalAffairs]. Additional performances are planned for major universities.



Klapa Sinj, performing with Meri Cetinić, one of the greatest voices of Croatian pop music. [Photo: www.mericetinic.com]

"A cultural wall is coming down to reveal these mystic voices to the rest of the world," Bach says. "Each performance receives a standing ovation, and if you see them, you will hear why." Bach will join the ensemble for part of each performance, accompanying the singers on guitar and piano, along with additional musicians. He intends to incorporate the voices of *Klapa* into his upcoming CD, blending rock music and a traditional form much like what Paul Simon has done, but in Bach's case, the CD will introduce the voices of his own homeland.



Klapa Sinj, during one of their rehearsals in September, 2005, in preparation for their upcoming U.S. tour. [Photo: Zoran Orlić]

"This is the first time *Klapa* singing will be presented to the world," Bach says. "The world is always looking for something new. We've seen it with Cuban music, with Irish music. It's time for *Klapa* to become a world phenomenon, and my next album will attempt to do just that. As Muhammad Ali once said, "it ain't bragging if it's true."

For more information about *Klapa Sinj* and their U.S. Tour, please visit: http://www.doors-art.com/bach/sinj_home2.html

For additional information about *Klapa Sinj* and their U.S. Tour, and to learn more about Croatia-related events in the U.S., please click on: <http://www.CroatianWorld.net>

Croatian NBA Player Zoran Planinić Featured in CNN's *Play of the Day*

EAST RUTHERFORD, NJ, Nov. 9 - New Jersey Nets guard Zoran Planinić of Croatia appeared for the second time in action during the past week in CNN's daily rubric *Play of the Day*. At the end of each day, CNN picks the best sports move, replaying it during prime time and afterwards in the evening. Planinić's fantastic performance was featured when he scored an 80-foot, 3-point shot at the buzzer during the NBA game between New Jersey Nets and Utah Jazz on Nov 9. Recently, the Nets' management announced that Planinić will be kept under contract through the 2006-07 NBA season. Currently, Planinić is playing the backup role for New Jersey, playing behind the best point guard in the NBA, Jason Kidd. Despite the fact that he is currently a backup point guard for New Jersey, Planinić, who is 25, is learning quickly from his "mentor" Jason Kidd, and is on his way to becoming a star and a major impact within the NBA.



New Jersey Nets guard Zoran Planinić [middle] grins as he is congratulated by guard Jeff McInnis [left] and forward Richard Jefferson [right] after he sank a 80-foot shot at the buzzer ending the third quarter of their NBA game against the Utah Jazz. [Photo: <http://news.yahoo.com>]

To watch Planinić's buzzer beater, please visit:
<http://www.nba.com/video/>

For additional information about Zoran Planinić's NBA career, please visit:
http://www.nba.com/playerfile/zoran_planinic/index.html?nav=page

Prime Minister Ivo Sanader: "Vukovar Defended Itself and Croatia"



15,000 people from across Croatia took part in commemorations to mark the 14th anniversary of the siege of Vukovar. [Photo: Večernji list]

VUKOVAR, Croatia, Nov. 18 – Residents of Vukovar commemorated Nov. 18, 1991, when the Yugoslav People's Army (JNA) and Serb paramilitary units overran Vukovar, the eastern Croatian town after a three-month siege. State and other delegations laid wreaths and lit candles at Vukovar's Memorial Cemetery of Homeland War Victims to commemorate the tragedy, after taking part in a procession that began in the city center. Also, a requiem mass for those who were killed or missing in the war was held by Požega Bishop Antun Skvorčević, who said that it would be a tragedy for those who suffered in the war to become prisoners of hatred. "The greatness of Vukovar soldiers lies in the fact that they did not attack anyone or tried to take something away from somebody, but fought for their families and for their homeland."

Recalling the Vukovar tragedy at the Nov. 1 parliament session, Croatian Prime Minister Ivo Sanader expressed deep homage to all defenders of Vukovar and their families, stressing that Vukovar defended itself and Croatia. The Croatian Prime Minister said that Nov. 18, 1991, the day on which Serb forces entered Vukovar following months of siege and relentless shelling, was a difficult day for Croatia, but noted that there is no reason for self-pity, because Croatia emerged from a war that was imposed on it as the victor, showing the world that it can fend for itself.

The battle of Vukovar started on Aug. 25, 1991. Some 1,800 Croatian soldiers fought back much stronger enemy troops for three months, until Nov. 18, when the defense lines were broken. During the siege, some 15,000 residents huddled in the town, which was hit by 8,000 – 9,000 shells every day. According to data from the town hospital, 1,642 people were killed and 2,557 wounded in the attacks, while 22,000 Croats and other non-Serbs were sent into exile after the fall of Vukovar.

Embassy of the Republic of Croatia
2343 Massachusetts Avenue, NW 20008
Contact: Josip Babić
E-mail: presscro@yahoo.com
<http://us.mfa.hr>