

Croatia

1- Some informations about Croatia

Second ex-Yugoslav country to join the European Union, in 2013, after Slovenia in 2004, Croatia has an area of 56,000 km², less than Serbia (88,000), equal to Bosnia (51,000), more than Slovenia (20,000). In comparison, UK (242,000), the Netherlands (41,000), Metropolitan France (550,000), Spain (505,000), Italia (300,000).

The country looks like a boomerang put on Bosnia. It also borders Slovenia and Hungary to the north, Serbia to the east and Montenegro to the south-east.

The Croatian relief is very rich. The Dinaric Alps are the backbone of the whole western part of the country, from Istria in the north-west, through the Kapela and Velebit mountain ranges, to the Montenegrin border. They are separated from the Adriatic Sea by the Dalmatian Coast (Zadar, Split, Dubrovnik,...), where it is possible to reach a myriad of islands (the list includes about ten climbs on Cres, Krk, Rab, Pag, Hvar, Korčula, Miljet,...). This whole area is covered by the Zones 3 and 4 (# 36 to 125). The highest point (Dinara, 1830m) is located on the Bosnian border. It can't be reached, but we can get close at the top of Glavaš (090).



The inner Croatia (Zones 1 Central Croatia and 2 Slavonia) is less mountainous, but seldom flat. The region is overlooked by the mounts Kalnik-Vranilac (643m) in the north, Sljeme (1033m) to the north of Zagreb, well known among BIG members and skiers, or Papuk (953m) in Slavonia. Flatness appears around Osijek and the Danube.

2-Tourism

Croatia has ten UNESCO sites. We go through the Plitvice Lakes National Park to reach Bigina Poljana (073) and Pogledalo (074). The Old City of Dubrovnik is located at the foot of Srđ (122) and the Historic City of Trogir is inevitable on the way to Žedno-Franini (101), on the Island of Čiovo.



Plitvice Lakes National Park



Plunging view of Dubrovnik

There are also fifteen sites on the UNESCO Tentative List, among which the castle of Veliki Tabor (002), the prehistoric fortified village of Lubenice (051), the Primošten vineyards (095), the medieval town of Motovun (041 and BIG) and Velebit Mountain (067-Planinarski dom Zavižan, 071-Veliki Alan and 070-Velike Brisnice).



Lubenice Cliff



Motovun

Green tourism is very important:

-8 National Parks. In addition to Plitvice and North Velebit, already mentioned, the list also visits Paklenica (083), Krka (091-Manastir Krka and 093-Lozovac) and Mjlet (120).

-A few Natural Parks (« park prirode »): Žumberak (011-Prisjeka Budinjak and 012-Noršić Selo), Papuk (027-Novo Zvečevo and 028-Nevoljas), Učka (045-Vojak and 046-Kalac/Sveta Jelena) and Biokovo (112-Sveti Jure).



Krka Monastery



Mljet National Park

-Other green areas: Japlenški vrh Forest Park (055), Bijeli Potoci Kamensko (079), Cetina River (106-Gata and 107-Podašpilje) and Konakovski Dvori in 124-Dubravka.

Thanks to steep landscapes there are a lot of amazing viewpoints and scenic routes, like Mali Alan (084) and Milina Zasida (113), or the 23 hairpins in 116-Kuna Peljeska. Some examples of remarkable viewpoints: the Pyramid of Vrh Cepeliš (023), Hotel Degenija (068), Vrh Marjana/Telegrin (102) above Split, Mosor Star Village (104), Vidova Gora (111), the highest point of all Adriatic islands (780m), Hum (115), Smrdan grad (117) and Vidikovac Sivi Soko (123).

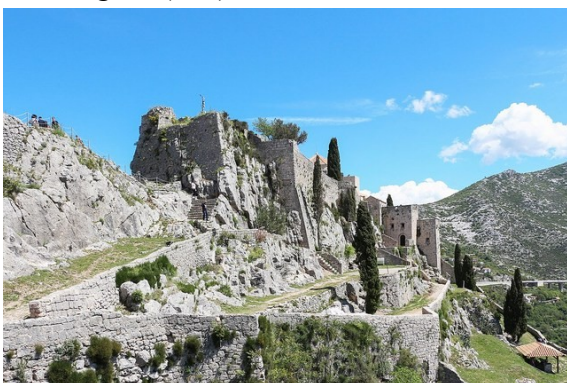


Mali Alan



Starry night at Mosor

A few castles: Veliki Tabor, already mentioned among the UNESCO sites, stari grad Kalnik (005), Dubovac in Karlovac (015), Klis Fortress (103), famous Game of Thrones filming location, and Smrdan grad (117).



Klis Fortress



Veliki Tabor

Other places of interest: the cobbled streets of Bale (047) in Istria, the impressive (37m high) stainless steel monument of Veliki Petrovac (022), that celebrates the uprising and resistance movement against nazi-fascism, the Stations of the Cross in Aljmaš (034), just above the Danube, and the statue of the « Victor » (076) at the top of Ljubovo.

Ski resorts are rare: Sljeme above Zagreb (008 and BIG) and Platak (054), near Risnjak National Park.



Veliki Petrovac



Narrow cobbled street in Bale

3-Sport – difficulty

3 BIGs in the Top4 in europoints: 112-Sveti Jure 1311pts, 067-Planinarski dom Zavižan (Oltari extended) 1114, 084-Mali Alan 1055, 045-Učka Vojak 1025. Then 086-Odašiljač Čelevac 910pts, 060-Viševica 866, 054-Platak 804 and 083-Nacionalji park Paklenica 803.



Planinarski dom Zavižan, BIG in the heart of North Velebit NP

The best bombs are often also the best in europoints. However, in Croatia the Top2 is rather short and quiet steep. The most explosive bombs are:

119- Vidonje and its chapel 40

043- Gologorica 37,3

083- Nacionalji park Paklenica 34,5

050- Skitača 33,9
 038- Škrapna 33,7
 084- Mali Alan 33,2
 086- Odašiljač Čelevac 31,6
 045- Učka Vojak 31,5
 009- Laz Bistrički-Moravče 30,5
 112- Sveti Jure 29,1

A few references abroad: Nebelhorn 63 points, Oscheniksee 49, Angliru 45, Mortirolo 34, Puy-de-Dôme 30, Mur de Huy 26 et Koppenberg 25.



Vidonje: the most explosive Croatian bomb in our list

The most beautiful elevation gains, higher than 900m:

112- Sveti Jure 1731m
 067- Planinarski Dom Zavižan 1568
 045- Učka Vojak 1365
 060- Viševica 1225
 086- Odašiljač Čelevac 1177
 054- Platak 1113
 061- Banska vrata (Breze) 1082
 084- Mali Alan 997
 064- Gornji Krivi Put 978
 059- Benkovac Fužinski 906
 078- Stara Vrata 904



The Wall of Gologorica (Quaeldich)



Sveti Jure

The longest distances, more than 20km:

071- Prijevoj Veliki Alan 32,4km

060- Viševica 31,7

067- Planinarski dom Zavižan 31,5

112- Sveti Jure 29,9

054- Platak 26,4

051- Predošćica (Cers) 23,8

030- Brezovo Polje 23,3

045- Učka Vojak 22,1

027- Novo Zvečevo (Papuk) 21,6

086- Odašiljač Čelevac 21,3

008- Sljeme 21

011- Prisjeka Budinjak 20,4

061- Banska vrata (Breze) 20,2



The longest

4-Media

Tour of Croatia - CRO Race (<https://www.crorace.com>)

It was created in 1994, interrupted from 2002 to 2006 and from 2008 to 2014. Since 2015, it has been upgraded (UCI 2.1) with Nibali's and A. Yates wins in 2017 and 2019. The places where the stages start and finish show the importance of the race as instrument for promoting tourism in Croatia.

The Učka mountain range (Natural Park) is the most visited, as crossing point, or as finish place at Vojak (BIG and 045). Stages end at Sveti Jure (BIG and 112) and start from the Plitvice Lakes National Park (1re part of 074). Papuk Natural Park is often crossed, at Kapavac (027) for instance, and Platak, ski resort near Risnjak National Park, was a finish place in 2019.

Other climbs of the list were already « King of the Mountain » in the Tour of Croatia: Vinogradi Ludbreški (006), Kastav (1st part of 037-Lisac), Gračišće (044), Gornje Jelenje (057), Prapatnica (099) and Gata (106).



Finish line at Sveti Jure



The **Istarsko Proljeće - Istrian Spring Trophy** (old Jadranska Magistrala) started in 1961 and is much more international since 2006 (UCI 2.2). It is a race stage (one prologue and three stages), that takes place in March, perfect time considering the climate and the hilly topography of Istria. The finish in the Old City (stari grad) of Labin (048) has become an annual event. Motovun (BIG and 041) and Oprtalj (040) are also very often chosen by the organizers. Among the climbs not selected, Vižinada (261m, 4,2km at 5,4%) is located near Motovun and Oprtalj. The IST avoids Vojak (045), too hard for such a period, but it often tackles it, climbing Dolenja Vas (400m, 5,8km-4,2%). Unfortunately, the Wall of Gologorica (043) and Skitača (050) are never used.

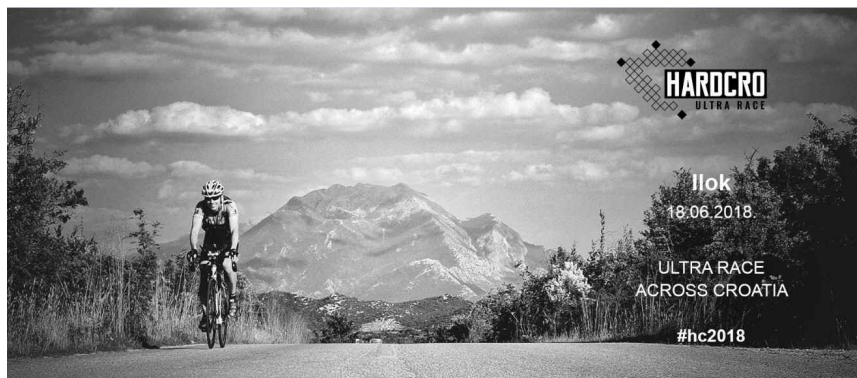


Oprtalj

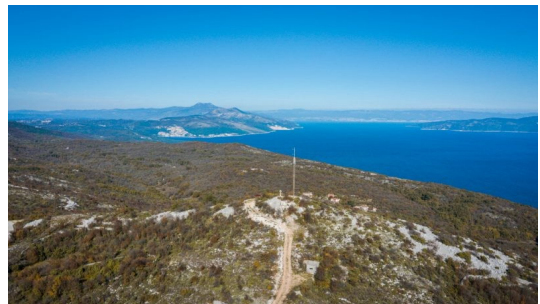
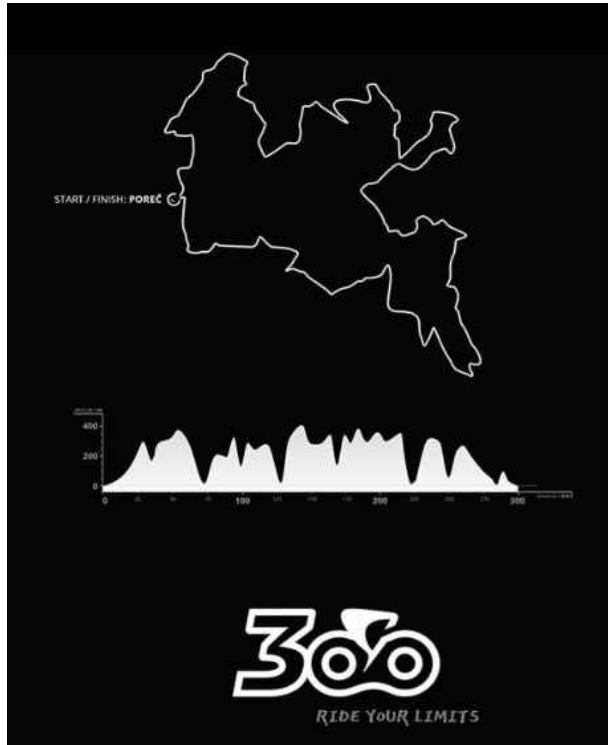


Final straight in Labin

HARDCRO is an ultra marathon race (1400km, elevation gain of 16000m) to achieve in 5 days. Informations on <http://hardcro.com/route-2016/> and route on Openrunner 6232764. Not so many « real » climbs, actually three of our list: Prapatnica (099), Učka (045) in both sides, but not to the top, and Gornje Jelenje (057).



Another ultra endurance cycling event, the **Istra 300** (elevation gain of 3900m, starting in Poreč) helps to discover the whole Istrian peninsula from the inside, thanks to a dozen of climbs, like 038-Skitača (photo3), 042-Kašćerga from the lake (jezero) Butoniga (photo2) and the unmissable 040-Oprtalj. More informations on <https://www.istria300.com/> and the route on Openrunner 11566089.



Let's finish with a first class hill climb, at **Učka** (Vojak). Website in Croatian only: <http://www.kingofucka.com/>

The advertisement shows two cyclists in action on a road. The cyclist on the left wears a Meridiana jersey, and the one on the right wears a BPN jersey. To the right, on a black background, is the 'KING OF UČKA' logo with a crown icon and the text 'HILL CLIMB RACE'. Below this, a table lists race times and average speeds. At the bottom, the website 'KINGOFUCKA.COM' is listed.

RACE TIME & AVERAGE SPEED	
1.00H	22KM/H
1.30H	14.7KM/H
2.00H	11KM/H
2.30H	8.8KM/H

KINGOFUCKA.COM