

## Impressum

### CATALOGUE OF ACTIVE TOURISM IN ŠIBENIK-KNIN COUNTY

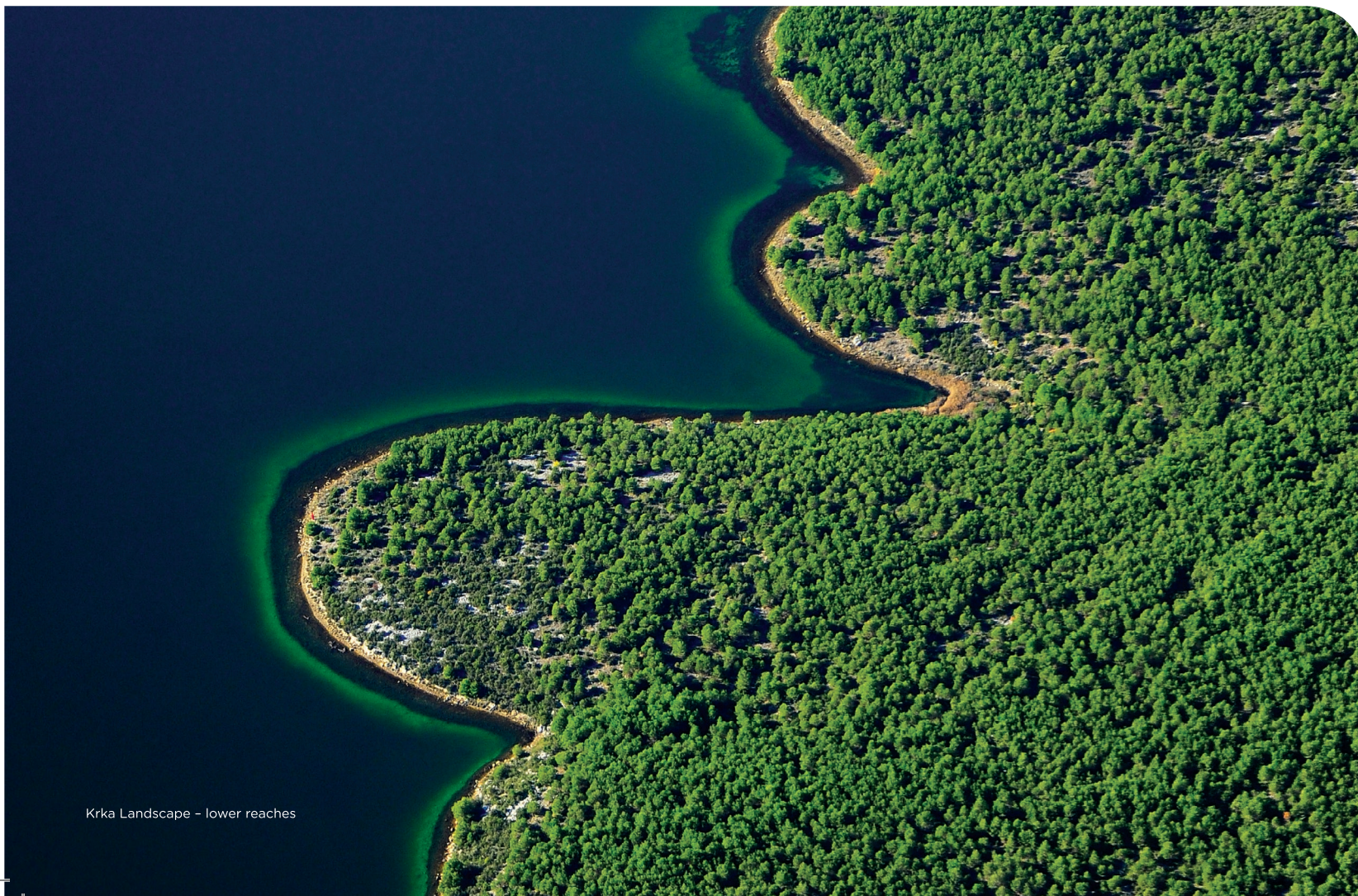
Author:	Hrvoje Zekanović
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Editors:	Anita Babačić Ajduk Tina Dragutin Burić
Language editor:	Andrina Luić
Proofreaders:	Anita Babačić Ajduk Tina Dragutin Burić
Photographs:	Archives of the Public Institution Nature of Šibenik-Knin County (Ivo Pervan, Novena), Joso Gracin, Milan Balaban
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#### **Tourism Valorization of the St Anthony Channel in Šibenik**

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The content of this publication is the sole responsibility of the Public Institution Nature of Šibenik-Knin County.

Šibenik, December 2019



Krka Landscape - lower reaches



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Cetina



## Introduction

When we think of our holidays, we do not think of the sun and sea only. Urban way of life has detached us from nature and this is why active holidays have become one of the fastest growing branches of tourism over the last few years.

Active tourism involves discovering new landscapes, climbing hills and mountains, exploring sea depths, everything that requires some effort, sweat and courage. Active tourism is intended for all adrenaline geeks and nature lovers, who are the target audience of this catalogue in which the most beautiful parts of Šibenik-Knin County will be revealed.

The guide to active tourism offers a selection of the most beautiful places in this part of Croatia as well as some brief information on natural features and cultural heritage of individual sites. In this way, an educational dimension has been added to sightseeing and recreation.



Šarena lakes





## Croatia

While being relatively small with, 56.542 km<sup>2</sup> of continental land area and 31.067 km<sup>2</sup> of territorial sea area, Croatia is perfect for those who prefer active holidays. The fact it is situated between the Pannonian Plain, the Dinarides and the Adriatic Sea explains an exceptional variety in a relatively small area. The contact of the three natural and geographic features enables different aspects of active tourism. Unique sea landscapes, thousands of coves, peninsulas and islands, beautiful beaches, river rapids in the mountains and rivers running quietly in the valleys, Dinara mountain peaks and deep caves, diversity and abundance of flora and fauna in a perfect harmony with a rich cultural heritage are the reasons why Croatia is considered a paradise for active tourism.

## Šibenik-Knin County

Šibenik-Knin County is located in the central part of northern Dalmatia, between Zadar County in the north-west and Split-Dalmatia County in the south-east. It has an area of 5670 km<sup>2</sup>, with 2994 km<sup>2</sup> of land area and 2676 km<sup>2</sup> of sea area. This part of the Adriatic is known for one of the most heavily indented coastlines in the Mediterranean with 285 islands, islets and reefs. The County encompasses two national parks – Krka and Kornati – and parts of two nature parks – Vrana Lake and Velebit. Dinara, one of the most beautiful Croatian mountains, with the highest peak (1831 metres) in Croatia, is also situated in this small but diverse county which abounds with karst rivers among which are Krka, Krčić and Čikola. According to the 2011 census, Šibenik-Knin County has a population of 109.375 people.

# Channel – Port in Šibenik

MAGNIFICENT ENTRANCE TO THE STONE CITY





## Natural attractions

This site consists of the St Anthony Channel and Šibenik Bay, in which lies the city of Šibenik. The channel is about 2500 metres long, 140 – 220 metres wide, 42 metres deep. Within the landscape there are two rocks and two islets – Školjić and Ljuljevac. The site features mostly karst terrain. The whole area took on its final shape 10.000 years ago when the lower part of the Krka River valley was submerged. The most valuable part of this area is a beautiful Aleppo pine forest, which adorns the channel coastline, along with rocky coast that creates a special atmosphere for all those who visit Šibenik by boat. The Krka delta is a habitat for 56 shellfish species, the best known of which are mussels. Due to the mixing of salt and fresh water, the channel abounds with fish.

## Curiosities

Amidst the channel, on its left side, there are two big openings leading to a 200-metre-long sea tunnel. The tunnel was dug in the 1950s to hide and protect warships from air raids. Since the openings look ominous in the harsh rocks, they were called Hitler's eyes by residents of Šibenik.

## Cultural heritage

Due to its proximity to the city, the channel is extremely rich in cultural and historical monuments such as churches and chapels, the most interesting of which is the Cave of St Anthony with a church of the same name. The cave was first mentioned in the 13<sup>th</sup> century and many hermits used to live in it; one of the most prominent among them was Jeronim Detrico, an aristocrat from Zadar, who was buried there in 1615. At the entrance of the St Anthony Channel there are visible traces of the two towers between which a chain was stretched in the period between the 14<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries; the chain served as the last line of defence at sea and it prevented enemy ships from entering Šibenik Bay.


At the exit of the St Anthony Channel, on the island of Ljuljevac, where once was the Benedictine monastery of St Nicholas, we can see the impressive Fortress of St Nicholas. It was built in the 16<sup>th</sup> century to protect Šibenik from Turkish naval attacks. The grandeur and size of this fortress were often enough to discourage even the most powerful enemy from trying to enter the city from the sea.

## How to visit the site

- › 1. A 4.4-km-long walkway, from which you can enjoy a stunning view of the city and the channel, is perfect for walking or running along the south-east coast of the St Anthony Channel. The walkway can be reached from Škar Cove, near St Nicholas Fortress or from Panikovac Cove in Šibenik Bay. It takes about 2 hours to walk the path in one direction, a few breaks included.
- › 2. Only one kilometre from Šibenik, in an attractive environment, there is a site for deep-water soloing. The best spot for this activity is under the lookout where there are some rocks that can be reached most easily from the pier in front of the Cave of St Anthony.
- › 3. Free solo climbing is only one of the activities you can choose here. Near the small pier in front of the Cave of St Anthony there are five 10-metre-high climbing routes. You can get to the climbing site by boat or by taking the walkway.

## Possible activities

diving, taking photographs, deep-water soloing, swimming, walking, running, kayaking, hiking, trekking, mountain biking, road cycling, free solo climbing, windsurfing

A photograph of a clear, turquoise spring flowing over rocks, with a white text overlay. The water is crystal clear, revealing the rocky bottom and surrounding vegetation. The text 'Cetina - Springs' is written in a large, white, sans-serif font, and below it, 'NUMEROUS SPRINGS WITH CRYSTAL CLEAR DRINKING WATER' is written in a smaller, white, sans-serif font.

# Cetina - Springs

NUMEROUS SPRINGS WITH CRYSTAL CLEAR DRINKING WATER



## Natural attractions

The springs of the Cetina River are among the most beautiful karst springs in Croatia. The Cetina – springs natural monument comprises three main springs of the Cetina: Veliko or Cetina vrilo, Vukovića vrilo, Batića vrilo and the first 200 metres of the course. The springs are extensions of isolated groundwater flows of the Dinara massif, which in contact with impermeable rocks erupt to the surface. The springs are located at the foot of Dinara, at an average altitude of 380 metres, in the north-west part of Cetina Field not far from Vrlika.

In the vicinity of the springs there are a few important speleological objects such as the Master Cave, Čulum Cave and Kotluša Cave, which are the biggest speleological objects in Šibenik-Knin County.

## Curiosities

Veliko vrilo is the largest and richest spring in water, which is also a submerged speleological object investigated to a length of 150 metres. Even today water from the spring is used for drinking by residents of the surrounding villages.

## Cultural heritage

Near the springs there are remains of the Early Croatian Church of St Saviour built in the 9<sup>th</sup> century. The church has the oldest bell tower in Croatia and it is considered to be one of the most important pre-Romanesque buildings in Croatia. Around the church there is a large necropolis with more than a thousand tombs in which some valuable archaeological objects have been found.

## How to visit the site

› This site is located a 20 minutes drive from Knin in the direction of Sinj or it is an hour's drive from Šibenik if you take the road over Svilaja. It is great for half-day and full-day trips and perfect for a picnic. Do not miss the opportunity to drink some spring water and in the summer you should dip your feet in the cold water of the Cetina River. This area is a perfect combination of cultural and natural heritage. Go for a walk along the springs, run across Pag Field and take some photographs with the springs in the background.

› The springs are enjoyed best on a clear day when the colour of the water is truly memorable. If you are not afraid, after having obtained permission from the Public Institution Nature of Šibenik-Knin County, you should definitely take a cave tour, accompanied by a trained speleologist while making sure not to touch anything.

### Possible activities

taking photographs, walking, running, mountain – biking, hiking, trekking, road cycling, caving



An aerial photograph of the Čikola Canyon, showing a deep, winding gorge with steep, rocky walls. The surrounding landscape is a mix of green vegetation and dry, brownish terrain. In the distance, there are more hills and a small body of water.

# Čikola Canyon

RUTHLESS BEAUTY OF STONE



## Natural attractions

This site comprises 13 km of the canyon, with a depth of up to 130 metres, from the end of Petrovo polje (Peter's Field) near Drniš to the Krka National Park boundary. Water has transformed this area into an exceptional geomorphological karst phenomenon. In the summer, when the river runs dry, in the canyon you can see potholes, sandbanks, cobbles and tufa (travertine) while on the edges of the canyon you can see "wrinkles", layers, rock creeps or gullies. The Čikola River provides a habitat for three indigenous fish species, numerous amphibians and reptiles. Thanks to its intact nature, the canyon is full of different mammals among which bats are the most numerous species.

## Curiosities

The first traces of human presence - from the Upper Palaeolithic Age (about 18000 BC) - on the territory of present-day Šibenik-Knin County have been found in the caves in Brina, situated in the western part of the Čikola Canyon, 4 km away from Drniš.

## Cultural heritage

One of the most significant cultural and historical monuments is the prehistoric hill fort of Osoje, located 8 km south-west from Drniš, near Pakovo Selo, on the very edge of the canyon. At the beginning of the canyon near Drniš, in the proximity of the road Šibenik-Knin, there is Gradina (Hill Fort) where some archaeological finds from prehistory to the second half of the 19th century have been recovered. The present round tower dates back to the 14<sup>th</sup> century and it belonged to the Nelipić noble family. The north-east defensive wall dates back to the Ottoman times.

## How to visit the site

› 1. Set off from Drniš or from the hamlet Knezovi 3 km downstream from Drniš on the right bank of the river. Step bravely into the water and experience the adventure of canyoning. You must be accompanied by a qualified person (mountain guide). Get ready for abseiling, jumping from 5-metre-high rocks into pools, washing your face under small waterfalls and encountering lots of frogs. As for the period in which this site should be visited, we suggest the beginning of the summer, while there is still some water or early autumn. Be prepared to get soaked unless you decide to go there in the middle of the summer when the river is without water. The end of the tour is on the road/ bridge Pakovo Selo - Ključ.

› 2. Provide yourself climbing equipment, an expert guide, muster up some courage and experience the most beautiful rocks in Šibenik-Knin County. Set off upstream on the side of the village Miljevci on the road Pakovo Selo - Ključ. The most suitable rocks for climbing are the ones on the right side of the river, which are easily seen from the bridge. You should bring enough water with you.

## Possible activities

taking photographs, walking, running, hiking, trekking, mountain biking, road cycling, free solo climbing, caving, canyoning, ZIP LINE

# Gvozdenovo Kamenar

LUNGS OF ŠIBENIK



## Natural attractions

Šibenik is lucky to have a green velvet carpet behind its back and not harsh karst terrain. This site features a dense Aleppo pine forest, which is sporadically mixed with Holm oak trees. As for the flora of the site, there is Illyrian Iris, which was proclaimed Croatian national flower in 2000 as proposed by the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts. In this area we can often find one of the oldest known species in Croatia and the first and oldest species endemic to Croatia - orchid *Ophrys flavicans* Vis.

## Curiosities

Many visitors to this site are unaware of the fact that about a hundred years ago these hills looked different due to the intensive cultivation of the vine. Numerous dry-stone walls are an eloquent testimony to the past for a close observer. The Aleppo pine that dominates the area was systematically planted as a first-class pioneer species for karst terrain afforestation. This tree is not actually an indigenous species, which can be easily proved by the fact that it was named after the city of Aleppo in the north of Syria. It is interesting that there is a small number of Aleppo pine trees in the region of their origin but it is an extremely widespread species all over the Mediterranean.

## Cultural heritage

As far as religious buildings are concerned, in the significant landscape on Vršine Hill, in Dubrava Parish we can visit the Church of St Michael. It was built in the Romanesque – Gothic style, it was first mentioned in written documents in 1414 and was consecrated in 1944. During the Turkish siege of Šibenik in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, when the enemy would come closer, guards on the top of Kamenar would lower three branches of a Holm oak tree that were placed high in the air. Thus, troops in St Michael Fortress would get a warning of the approaching threat.

Trumpets would be blown in the city, the gates would be closed and defenders would take up their positions on the wall. In the immediate vicinity of the site there are two of the four fortresses of Šibenik, St John Fortress and Barone/ Šubičevac Fortress, both of which were built in 1647 to protect the city against Turkish invasions.

## How to visit the site

› 1. Within the significant landscape Gvozdenovo – Kamenar there is an educational mountain and ecological trail “Ante Frua”. The trail consists of seven control points, where the last one is optional and it leads from St John Fortress, Šubičevac Fortress to Vidilica, then along the pass between Jamnjak and Kamenar to Orlovača on Trtar Hill or to the Falconry Centre in Dubrava.

› 2. For cyclists there are a few cycle routes and the longest “Šubičevac track” is about 5 km long. It starts near the bowling alley, then it takes Put Luguše to the top of the hill and it leads back to Vidilica through the pass between Luguša and Kamenar.

› 3. You can walk or cycle from the city neighbourhood Rokići in an eastward direction to the Church of St Michael. Those who are not tired can proceed to the cross overlooking Ražine where they will be able to enjoy a stunning view of Donje polje, Ražine and Morinje Bay.

› 4. The whole landscape is full of magnificent views of the city and the Šibenik bay. Therefore, you will not be disappointed no matter which mountain trail you take. Within the landscape there is an 800-metre-long trim track as well as a playground.

## Possible activities

taking photographs, mountain biking, walking, running, hiking, trekking





## Natural attractions

Rogoznica Lake (Dragon's Eye, Dragon's Lake, Galešnica) is a unique geomorphological and hydrological phenomenon. Specific hydrological characteristics of the lake resulted in the development of distinctive flora and fauna. The lake is located on the Gradina Peninsula. This lake, with an area of about 5300 m<sup>2</sup>, is surrounded by sheer cliffs which are 4-23 metres high. The greatest depth recorded is 15 metres. Dragon's Eye was created by the collapse of a cavern, cave that had been formed long before the creation of Dragon's Eye. What happens very often in caverns that are in shallow water, near the surface of the land, is that their arches collapse and sinkholes are formed. That is what happened in this case. 10.000 years ago, after the end of the most recent Ice Age, sea level rose by about 100 metres and the sea forced its way through the cracks into the sinkhole and formed a marine lake. The lake seems to lack a visible surface connection with the surrounding sea, however, a mediolittoral step can be easily spotted, which proves that there is impact of the tides in the lake, that is to say, there is an underground connection with the sea.

## Curiosities

A folk tale says that a change in sea level in the lake is a sign that the dragon is in the lake or it went in search of food. Another tale says that when the water in the lake turns white, the dragon resting at the bottom of the lake has just turned.

## Cultural heritage

Dragon's Eye is situated in the vicinity of the small town of Rogoznica, which is assumed to have been inhabited in the period of Ancient Greece. In Stupin, near the town, the remains of a prehistoric hill fort and some fragments of pottery have been found.

Archaeological research has confirmed the existence of the shrine of Diomedes on Ploča Promontory near Rogoznica. On the Gradina Peninsula we can also find the remains of a prehistoric hill fort, a fortified settlement with tumuli and Roman salt pans. The islet of Kopara, on which the oldest part of Rogoznica is situated, was inhabited in 1518 by those who fled from the Turks.

## How to visit the site

› While on the main road, turn towards Rogoznica and follow tourist signs. You cannot drive to the lake, so park your car in the town or in Marina Frapa which is located in the proximity of the lake. If the temperature is OK and if you are not afraid of the legend of the terrifying dragon, jump off the cliffs into the refreshing water of the lake.

› The lake is ideal for deep-water soloing, so for those who are strong and experienced enough we suggest climbing the steep cliffs along the lake. This whole area is perfect for diving and swimming and if it is not the bathing season, you should go for a walk around the islet of Kopara, which is now connected to the mainland and do not forget to take a look at Dragon's Ear, an underwater cave whose entrance can be seen right under the surface, in a little pool, on an artificial island, in the middle of Marina Frapa.

## Possible activities

diving, taking photographs, deep-water soloing, swimming, hiking, running



# Guduća River

SAFARI ADVENTURE IN THE HEART OF THE MEDITERRANEAN



## Natural attractions

The Krka River in its lower reaches expands into the second largest lake in Croatia, Prokljan Lake on whose north-west banks is the delta of the Guduća River. The delta of this river has some distinctive characteristics due to the contact of salt and fresh water. The Guduća, an almost unknown river, unexpectedly appears amidst the harsh Mediterranean karst. It is hard to say how long the Guduća is because the source of one of its main tributaries, the Bribiština River, is below Bribirska Glavica while some other major tributaries' sources are far away, in Ravni kotari. Lower reaches of the Guduća River have common characteristics of a canyon but before entering Prokljan Lake, the canyon expands and there appears a small alluvial plain with a river meandering through it. Countless frogs, pond turtles, a few harmless grass snakes and countless bird species, just to name a few reasons why you should not miss the opportunity to visit this river.

## Curiosities

Although it may sound unbelievable, you can experience a true safari adventure not far from Šibenik. Come to the countryside and visit a breathtaking landscape. Guduća safari is an unusual experience of navigating the swamp while enjoying the company of frogs and bird watching. The crystal clear river, unspoiled nature, deep canyon and the river that will leave you breathless.

## Cultural heritage

Along the Bribiština River, which is the largest tributary of the Guduća River, 15 km from the town of Skradin, there is Bribir. Near this settlement there is an extremely important archaeological site known as Bribirska Glavica (ancient Varvaria and Early Croatian Bribir), which is known as the "Croatian Troy" among archaeologists.

This is one of the most important archaeological sites in Croatia, which enables us to keep track of life in this area from prehistoric period, the time of the Liburnians, Early and Late Antiquity, Early Croatian history and the Late Middle Ages. During the reign of the Šubić family this was the centre of the Croatian state in the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries.

## How to visit the site

- › 1. Go from Skradin towards the hamlet Bičine and then proceed to the village Prokljan (7 km). If you head westwards from the village, after 2 km you will come across a lookout, which is reached by a macadam road and is ideal for picnics and bird watching. You can walk to the lookout or you can use an off-road vehicle or a mountain bike. Those who would like to reach the spring called Garin kuk, located near the river, should go northwards for about a kilometre and then take a serpentine path to the canyon. After reaching the canyon, take the path on the left side of the river and after 200 metres you will see the spring.
- › 2. You can take a kayak trip to the unforgettable delta of the Guduća; set off from the village Prokljan and then you need to row in one direction for about 5 km (about an hour) or from Skradin for about 15 km (3 hours). The desired destination is the spring of Garin kuk, which also represents the end point reachable by boat.
- › 3. The delta of the river can be reached only by motorboat and then you need a rowing boat to continue your trip through the forks to Garin kuk.

## Possible activities

taking photographs, swimming, walking, running, kayaking, hiking, trekking, mountain biking, road cycling, birdwatching

An aerial photograph of Prokljan Lake, showing a large, dark green body of water. In the center, there is a small, irregularly shaped island with a mix of green and brown vegetation. A small, light-colored boat is visible on the island. The water around the island shows varying shades of green, indicating different depths and possibly submerged vegetation.

# Prokljan Lake

SECOND LARGEST LAKE IN CROATIA



## Natural attractions

4 kilometres downstream from the town of Skradin there is Prokljan Lake. Pukljan is about 6.7 km long, 2.8 km wide, the total shoreline is 28.8 km and the total area of the lake is about 11.5 km<sup>2</sup>. Prokljan Lake took on its present shape at the beginning of the Holocene, 10.000 years ago when sea level rose by 100 metres. The St Joseph Channel covers an area from the lake towards the sea. On the shores of the lake there are some small villages such as Raslina, Prokljan, Stubalj and Vruļje. Pukljan is an important habitat for numerous shellfish species, wetlands and reedbeds near the shores abound with amphibians and rocky ground with sparse low vegetation abounds with reptiles. 153 bird species have been recorded at the lake. In the St Joseph Channel there is Trdanj Cave with one of the most important bat colonies in Croatia.

## Curiosities

In Roman times when the lake level was 2 metres lower than today, the island of Stipanac was connected to the mainland by a stone embankment. Now the embankment is below the lake surface and it is clearly visible. As for this island, there is a folk tale of the evil and cruel master Gavan who ruled the entire area and allegedly lived on the island of Stipanac. According to the tale, the master was so wicked and arrogant that he ended up on the bottom of the lake along with his palace.

## Cultural heritage

In the northern part of the lake, south of the village Prokljan we can see the island of Stipanac, Sustipan or St Stephen, the only island in Pukljan. On the island of Stipanac the remains of the Romanesque Church of St Stephen can be found. In Raslina you can visit the Church of St Michael, which was first mentioned in the 15<sup>th</sup> century.

In the whole area of Pukljan there are numerous traces of ancient settlements, so some stone fragments from the Middle Palaeolithic period and fragments from the Early Neolithic period have been often recovered. This area boasts the remains of the ancient “villae rusticae”, the remains of a Roman aqueduct and the ruins of an Early Christian basilica.

## How to visit the site

- 1. Prokljan Lake is ideal for sea kayaking. You can choose any village on the shore of the lake to start a tour. You should visit the island of Stipanac, which can be reached most easily from the village Prokljan.
- 2. From Skradin to the lookout over the Guduća River there is a waymarked cycle trail of moderate difficulty, 10 kilometres long. We recommend swimming in the lake and cycling in the summer.
- 3. Due to its size and exposure to winds, the lake is suitable for windsurfing.
- 4. For those who would like to enjoy a beautiful view, we suggest visiting Trdanj Hill in the St Joseph Channel. The hill can be reached from Zaton, walk the entire asphalt road, go across Zvizda Beach and then head for St Joseph Channel for about 2 kilometres and after that walk a waymarked mountain path for another 2 kilometres.

## Possible activities

diving, taking photographs, swimming, walking, running, kayaking, hiking, trekking, mountain biking, road cycling, windsurfing, speleology



# Murter

FIRST SNORKELLING TRAIL IN CROATIA



## Natural attractions

Murter with the Murter Channel, which is situated between the island of Murter and the mainland, is a typical Dalmatian coastal area characterised by a heavily indented coastline and a harmony of small picturesque towns and unspoiled nature. In the underwater world of the Murter Channel, which became a cove after the Tisno Bridge was built we can often find Neptune grass and infralittoral algae that contribute to the overall biodiversity of marine life.

## Curiosities

Between Tisno and Jezera on the island of Murter, at St Andrew's Beach, we can see the location of the first underwater interpretive trail in Croatia. It is intended for both adults and children who are given the opportunity to freely discover the Mediterranean underwater world by diving into an unpolluted marine area. To get the complete experience of the trail, you do not have to dive, all you need is to be able to swim and use fins, a diving mask and a snorkel although you can also don your wetsuit and dive near the surface. The trail consists of seven buoys marking the observation points. The buoys are numbered and on their surface there is a handle wide enough to enable taking a break. At a depth of 50 centimetres there are educational plaques attached to the buoys, which present and explain the characteristics of this site.

## Cultural heritage

On the island of Murter there are four small towns. Each of them has its own characteristics, so if in Tisno, go and visit the parish Church of the Holy Spirit built in 1548. Next to the church there is a bell tower which was constructed in 1680 by local craftsmen.

What makes this town so special is the Sanctuary of the Madonna of Caravaggio, which can be reached if you take 200 steps in "Caravaggio Street". Jezera is well-known for its parish Church of the Madonna of Good Health built in 1722 as well as for its numerous narrow streets. Particularly interesting are the remains of the Roman city of Colentum in Murter and the baroque Church of St Francis of Assisi with a bell tower built in 1601 in Betina.

## How to visit the site

- 1. Get to Tisno or Jezera by car, bus or boat. Walk or cycle to the trail that is 300 metres far from Tisno and 1500 metres from Jezera. Take a diving mask, a snorkel, a pair of fins and go and experience the first snorkelling trail in Croatia.
- 2. The whole island of Murter is perfect for adventures in nature, so we suggest that you explore it by running, walking or cycling.
- 3. At the turn-off for Jezera on the main road Tisno – Murter, turn right towards the Church of St Roko and head for the Murtarić Peninsula which, apart from being an interesting geomorphological phenomenon, provides excellent opportunities for walking and running. You can arrive in the cove in front of Murtarić by bicycle.
- 4. Countless coves and numerous islands and islets around Murter are perfect for sea kayaking.

### Possible activities

diving, taking photographs, snorkelling, swimming, walking, running, kayaking, mountain biking, road cycling

# Krčić River

SHY KARST BEAUTY





## Natural attractions

The Krčić and Krka rivers make a unique hydrographic system with plenty of karst, hydrographic and morphological phenomena. The Krčić, which is ten kilometres long from its source to Topoljski Waterfall (the mouth of the Krka), features a deep and picturesque canyon, which at its end abounds with nicely revealed flexures of geological layers dating back to the Triassic and Jurassic periods as well as with interesting denudational relief forms. In this canyon there are also travertine waterfalls and the most beautiful one is Topoljski Waterfall under which the Krka River rises. The Krčić also features a great diversity of habitats. Not only are there water habitats, swamps and wetlands near the river but also rocky grassland and scrubland on the slopes of the canyon. The flora of this area has not been fully explored. Among the species of this site there is a significant number of endemic, endangered and protected species.

## Curiosities

In the geological history of the area Krka and Krčić used to be one river. Nowadays, in the summer the Krčić runs dry in order to give its life force to the Krka. If you ever end up in Suho polje (Dry Field) at the end of Napoleon Road, you will be able to see myriad endemic butterflies – Dalmatian Ringlets.

## Cultural heritage

Along the Krčić River there is a trail that leads from the source of the Krka River, 15 km long. It was constructed during the Napoleonic era and then reconstructed during the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The river boasts a beautiful stone bridge called Napoleon's Bridge.

## How to visit the site

The trail along the Krčić is situated in a pleasant environment of the canyon and follows the course of the karst beauty, thus being ideal for cycling and long walks.

› 1. Get to Topoljski Waterfall by car, and then take the trail along the river on a bicycle. The section of the trail from Topoljski Waterfall to its end in Suho polje covers 15 kilometres. If you take a break once, the track tour (in both directions) will take about five hours.

› 2. It will take you a whole day to walk the complete route. Along the trail there are several spots to take a break, which are ideal for picnics. It is up to you which part of the trail you would like to be your end point. When in the village Krčić, you should take a look at a fountain that will convey the force of water. Do not hesitate to get off the trail as often as you wish in order to see magnificent waterfalls or abandoned water mills.

## Possible activities

taking photographs, walking, running, hiking, trekking, mountain biking, road cycling





## Natural attractions

This site is of great importance because of its well-preserved Mediterranean bushes (maquis), especially juniper (*Juniperus* spp.). From the east towards the west degradation stages can be easily spotted, from the Aleppo pine forest, maquis to the garigues at the westernmost point of the peninsula. The peninsula is about 3.5 km long, a few hundred metres wide and it lies in the west – east direction. The greatest value of this area is a well-preserved genuine Mediterranean landscape.

## Curiosities

In the westernmost part of the peninsula there is an interesting speleological object called Medina pećina (Sea Bear Cave) which can be entered in two ways: you can dive for about twenty metres from the shore through a submerged channel or you can use a rope to climb down for about ten metres. In this cave there is a small beach which, according to what the residents of Grebaštica say, is the place where the Mediterranean monk seal or sea bear as it is called here, has a rest. This is also a game breeding site, so you will often be able to see mouflons while walking around the peninsula.

## Cultural heritage

The most important cultural and historical monument is a well-preserved defensive wall with loopholes built in 1497. The wall is 6-9 metres high, 60-80 centimetres wide and it is spread across the whole peninsula. It was used to protect local people from the Turks. The wall is located in the easternmost part of the peninsula and obstructs vehicular traffic.

## How to visit the site

➤ The peninsula is ideal for walking or mountain biking; in the summer it is ideal for spending the whole day enjoying the countryside or swimming and if it is a colder period of the year, you can go for a long walk or ride a bike. The total length of the paths is about 4 kilometres, so it will take you about 3 hours (including a few breaks) to visit the site.

### Possible activities

diving, taking photos, swimming, walking, running, kayaking, hiking, trekking, mountain biking



# Žut-Sit group of islands

BLUE AND WHITE HARMONY



## Natural attractions

The Kornati Archipelago consists of four groups of islands, which were named after the main island within each group: Piškera, Kornat, Žut and Sit. The Žut-Sit group of islands comprises 35 islands and islets, 8 rocks and one reef. The largest island is Žut (14.81 km<sup>2</sup>) with the highest peak on Gubavac Hill (176 metres). The second largest island is Sit (1.63 km<sup>2</sup>) with the highest peak Veli vrh (84 metres). Karst terrain dominates the area, so on the islands we can see a large number of karst relief forms created by corrosion and erosion processes (solution pans, grikes, furrows, etc.). The islands lack spring water. The shores are indented with numerous bays, coves and promontories. The beauty of the landscape is accentuated by the contrast of the blue sea and white carbonate rocks scantily covered with Eu-Mediterranean vegetation. The underwater world is a habitat for about a hundred fish species and you can often encounter meadows of Neptune grass.

## Curiosities

This area took on its present shape in the relatively recent geological history; actually, only 10.000 years ago these islands were part of the mainland. Nowadays, you need a boat to reach the zones that once could be reached by land.

## Cultural heritage

The first traces of settlements on the island of Žut date back to Liburnian times, evidence of which is a prehistoric hill fort of Grbe as well as tumuli in Pinizelić and Pod Ražanj position. In Roman times the islands were inhabited exclusively by shepherds. The first written mention of the island is in a list of Zadar islands (11<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries) under the name of Žut.

## How to visit the site

- 1. Sailing is likely to be the main activity in this labyrinth of islands and islets. The island of Murter is the best starting point and as an end point the best choice would be ACI Marina Žut, which is located in the westernmost part of the cove named Žut Harbour.
- 2. Larger islands are ideal for walking and trekking. You can begin walking from any cove and your perfect end point should be Gubavac Hill on the island of Žut, from which you can enjoy a stunning view.
- 3. Crystal clear sea and countless coves are perfect for diving and swimming in the summer.

### Possible activities

diving, taking photographs, swimming, walking, running, kayaking, hiking, trekking, mountain biking, windsurfing, sailing



# Krka River - upper reaches

RIVER IN THE CITY, CITY ON THE RIVER



## Natural attractions

Rijeka Krka izvire sjeveroistočno od Knina podno Topoljskog buka s kojim ujedno završava rijeka Krčić. Krka ima tri stalna izvora: Glavni izvor, Mali izvor i Treći izvor. Glavni izvor nalazi se u špilji podno Topoljskog buka dok se Treći izvor i Mali izvor nalaze nešto niže na lijevoj obali rijeke. U gornjem dijelu toka Krka ima čak tri veća pritoka: Kosovčicu, Orašnicu i Butišnicu. Ovdje žive čak tri endemske ribe: zlousti pastrva, ilirski klen i zрманjski klen. Gornji tok rijeke Krke stanište je vidre, ugrožene svojte u europskim razmjerima.

## Curiosities

In its upper reaches the Krka River offers its visitors something that few other Croatian rivers can offer – you are literally in the centre of the city but at the same time you are at the crystal clear karst beauty.

## Cultural heritage

The Krka River runs past the hill with a medieval fortress erected in the mid-10<sup>th</sup> century. This fortress, which is the most important cultural and historical monument of the town of Knin, took on its final shape at the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The fortress is one of the largest fortification structures in Dalmatia and it is divided into the upper, middle and lower towns, which are connected by drawbridges. The oldest town is the upper town in the northern part of the fortress while the middle and lower towns were constructed in the Late Middle Ages.

## How to visit the site

- 1. Along the major part of the river's course facing the town of Knin there is an embankment ideal for long walks and cycling.
- 2. This part of the river is perfect for panoramic downhill in rubber dinghies, canoes or kayaks. You should start downhill under the bridge on the road Knin – Sinj and end it near the "water gauge", two kilometres downstream from Sastavci, which is the place where the Krka and its tributary Butišnica meet. This part of the upper reaches is about 10 kilometres long and it is suitable for all age groups on condition that a qualified person and adequate equipment are provided. If you row at a normal pace, the complete downhill takes about 2 hours.

### Possible activities

taking photographs, walking, running, kayaking, mountain biking, road cycling

# Dinara

HIGHEST CROATIAN MOUNTAIN



## Natural attractions

Dinara Mountain is the largest site of the National Ecological Network in Šibenik-Knin County. It features enormous habitat diversity and numerous protected species. It is 84 km long and it stretches from the north-west to the south-east. The highest peak is Dinara or as it is often called Sinjal (1831 metres), which is also the highest peak in Croatia. The mountain abounds with karst landforms – dolines, karst basins and poljes. Giant limestone rocks, vast meadows of dry grass, dense forests and sporadic traces of human presence make Dinara a memorable place. On Dinara there is hardly any surface water due to the karst permeability, however, there is a well-developed underground system of connected water flows which perform water filtration and drainage. Surface water flows can be found in the fields at the foot of the mountain, the most important of which are Krčić and Cetina.

## Curiosities

What even residents of the neighbouring town of Knin do not know is that only a few kilometres further along the road towards Strmica, in Surdup Gorge, is the location of a real rainforest. When we say rainforest today, everybody thinks of a tropical rainforest, i.e. jungle. As a matter of fact, rainforest (in Croatian “prašuma”) literally means “old forest”, it is a type of forest vegetation that has been developing with a little or no impact of man since its creation; in other words, those are forest areas created exclusively by natural processes.

## Cultural heritage

Due to its reputation of being inaccessible and inhospitable, Dinara has not left many traces of man's activities. Only shepherds used to dwell there in the warm part of the year. Before World War II there were 500 summer shepherd huts and 135.000 sheep.

The easiest way to reach the place by car is to set off from the hamlet Guge near Knin and then drive to Markov grob (Mark's grave) and the Crvena zemlja (Red Soil) military training grounds. You should leave your car at Mark's grave because the road is in bad condition and then continue on foot across the grassy plateaus Brezovac, Samar and Duler towards the top of Dinara. It takes five hours to climb from Mark's grave to the summit. Those who have an off-road vehicle can drive to Duler and then it will take them about two hours to walk to the summit.

## How to visit the site

› 1. The highest and one of the most attractive Croatian mountains is ideal for hiking. We suggest a two-day trip in the warm part of the year. You can sleep in a tent or in a mountain hut. Mountain hut Brezovac and mountain shelters Glavaš and Martinova košara are available. If you would like a shorter Dinara tour, you can use your off-road vehicle to drive across the Red Soil military training grounds and then get to Brezovac or Samar. After that it will take you only a few hours to walk to the summit.

› 2. Hiking and trekking seem to be perfect activities that can be taken in Surdup Gorge, which is situated 5 kilometres from Knin, on the road Knin – Strmica. The turn-off for the canyon is on the north-east side, immediately after a small bridge that goes over the stream coming out of the canyon. The first part is ideal for hiking but as you are walking on, paths start to disappear.

## Possible activities

taking photographs, walking, running, hiking, trekking, mountain biking, free solo climbing, caving, mountain climbing







## Natural attractions

The island of Žirje has an area of 15 km<sup>2</sup> and it is 12 km long. The underwater world of the southern part of the island of Žirje is protected through the European network of nature protection areas Natura 2000. The coves of Kabal, Velika and Mala stupica are protected because of their reef habitats of Neptune grass. Natural environment on land is equally fascinating, so no one can remain indifferent to the pristine Mediterranean landscape. Pine forests, maquis, garigue, karst terrain in harmony with the deep blue sea are the most precious things this island possesses.

## Curiosities

This small open sea island played a crucial role in recent Croatian history – in defending the city of Šibenik and the entire country. During the Patriotic War, on 16 September 1991, while the battle for the Šibenik Bridge was raging, an artillery battery on Zvizdulja Hill joined the battle for Šibenik and played a decisive role in it.

## Cultural heritage

It is assumed that the island was named after the former dense Holm oak forests which abounded with acorns (žir means acorn in Croatian). Due to its location the island has always served as an outpost and in Byzantine times, in the 6<sup>th</sup> century, Gradina hill fort was constructed overlooking Stupica Cave and Gradina was a command centre in the chain of fortresses on open sea islands. Among other cultural and historical monuments worth mentioning is the parish Church of St Mary, whose oldest parts date back to the 15<sup>th</sup> century.

## How to visit the site

➤ 1. Taking into consideration the fact it has 22 km of cycle trails along the entire island, Žirje is ideal for cycling. Upon arrival at the island, the trail leads from Muna Cove uphill and then to the marvellous Stupica Cove in the south-east of the island through a centenarian pine forest. While heading northwards, across the rich Žirje Field, the trail goes past the local church and cemetery and then through the old village Žirje. Continuing northwards, the trail leads to Mikavica Cove and Vela Glava Hill, from which there is an awe-inspiring view.

➤ 2. The indented coast turned the island into an ideal site for sea kayaking. For those who are courageous and fit enough, we can recommend that you start from Muna Cave around the entire island. For those who are even more daring, we suggest that you go kayaking, accompanied by a motorboat, to the sea open island with a lighthouse – Blitvenica.

## Possible activities


diving, taking photographs,  
swimming, walking, running,  
kayaking, hiking, trekking, mountain  
biking, road cycling, free solo  
climbing, windsurfing











For all those who visit Šibenik and enjoy sports and walking, the walkway in the St Anthony Channel is a must-see. Walking or running on the 4.4-kilometre-long walkway along the south-east side of the St Anthony Channel offers the opportunity for recreation while enjoying a beautiful view of the city and the channel. The walkway can be reached from Škar Cove, near St Nicholas Fortress or from Panikovac Cove in Šibenik Bay. It takes about 2 hours to walk the path in one direction, a few breaks included.





Between Tisno and Jezera on the island of Murter, at St Andrew's Beach, we can see the location of the first underwater interpretive trail in Croatia. On the seven underwater educational plaques there is some information on marine life of the underwater world of the Adriatic. The beach is located in the shade of the thick pine forest, thus being perfect for cycling and walking. After equipping yourselves with a diving mask and a pair of fins, you can dive and learn.



The best climbing site in Šibenik-Knin County is the one at the Čikola River. Only a few hundred metres upstream from the road Pakovo Selo – Ključ there are rocks which are 40 metres high and a few hundred metres long. The size of a rock makes it possible to choose the difficulty of a climb, from the easiest climbing routes to the most difficult ones with large overhangs. Due to its south facing position and the fact that it is protected from the bora wind, this climbing site is ideal for the cold period of the year.







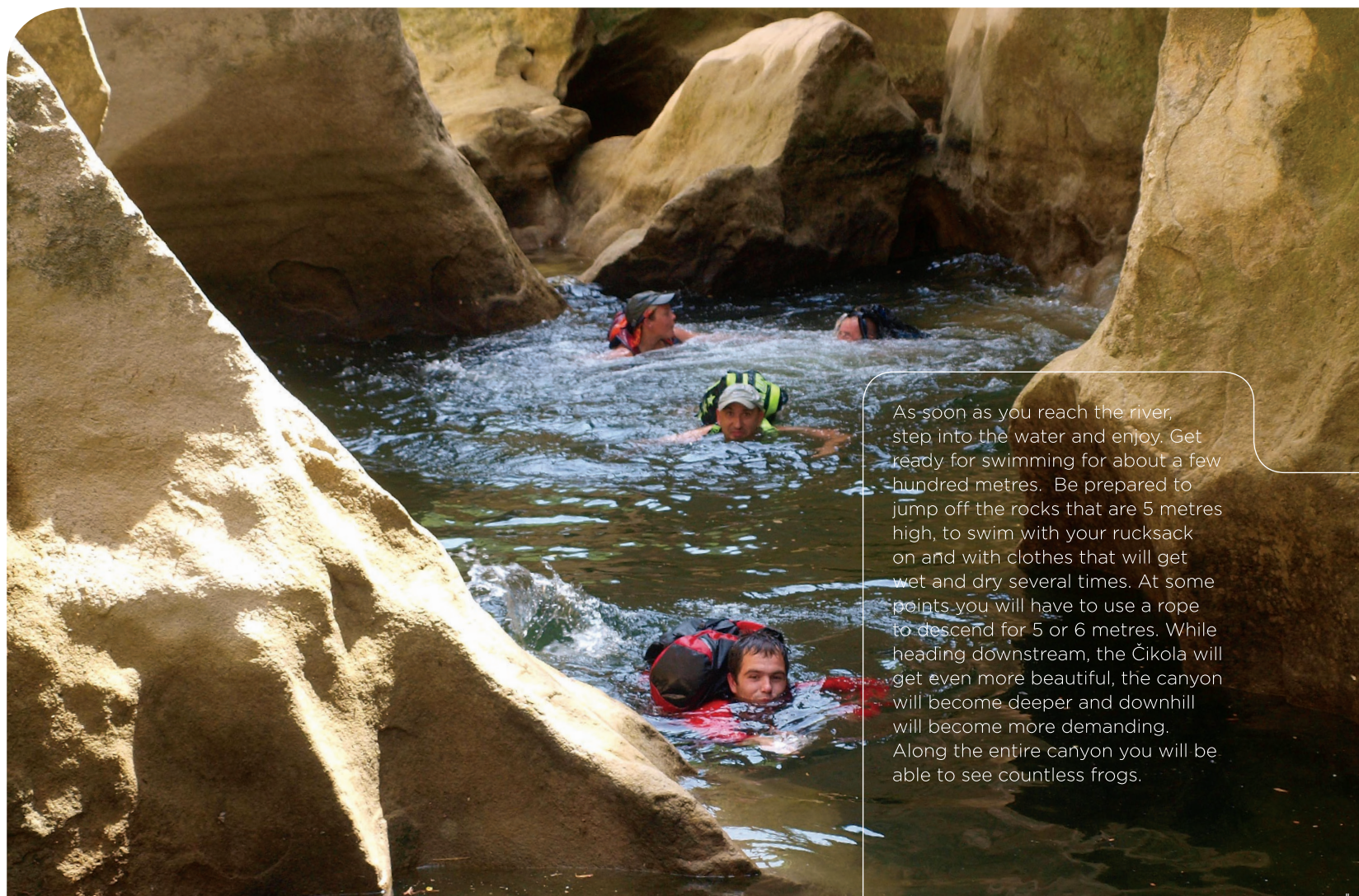
Only one kilometre from Šibenik, in an attractive environment there is a relatively small site for deep-water soloing. The best spot for this activity is under the lookout where there are some rocks that can be reached most easily from the pier in front of the Cave of St Anthony.



If you choose this adventure, it is best to start from Knezovi, on the right side of the river, about 2 kilometres downstream from Drniš. Before you set off, you should leave your car near the bridge over the Čikola on the road Pakovo Selo - Ključ. This part of the unspoiled nature can be experienced in a completely different way when there is water in the riverbed. In the winter and autumn, due to a huge amount of water, this adventure is impossible. All those who decide to go canyoning at the Čikola River need to be accompanied by a mountain guide and they should obtain permission from the Public Institution Nature of Šibenik - Knin County.

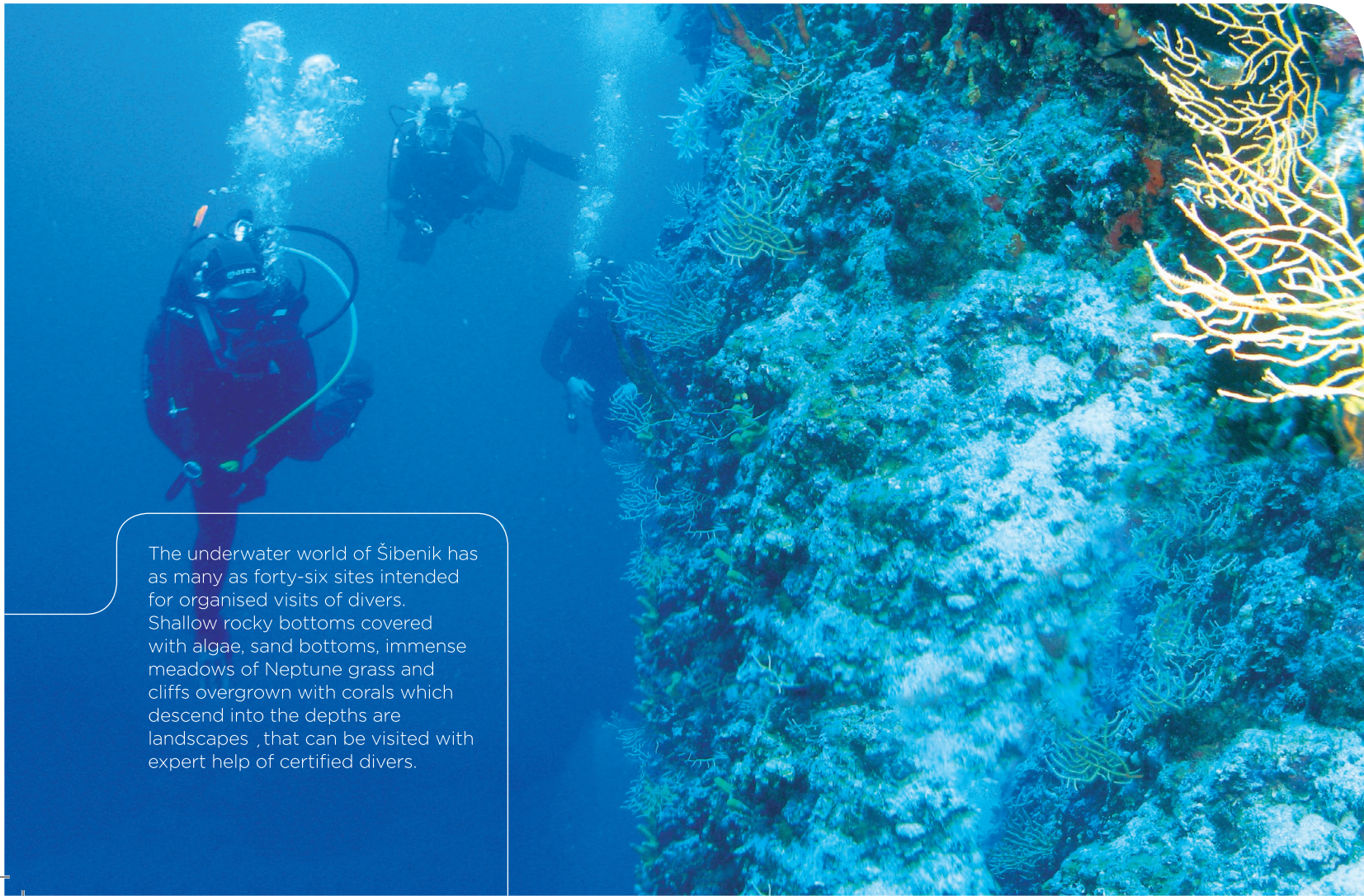






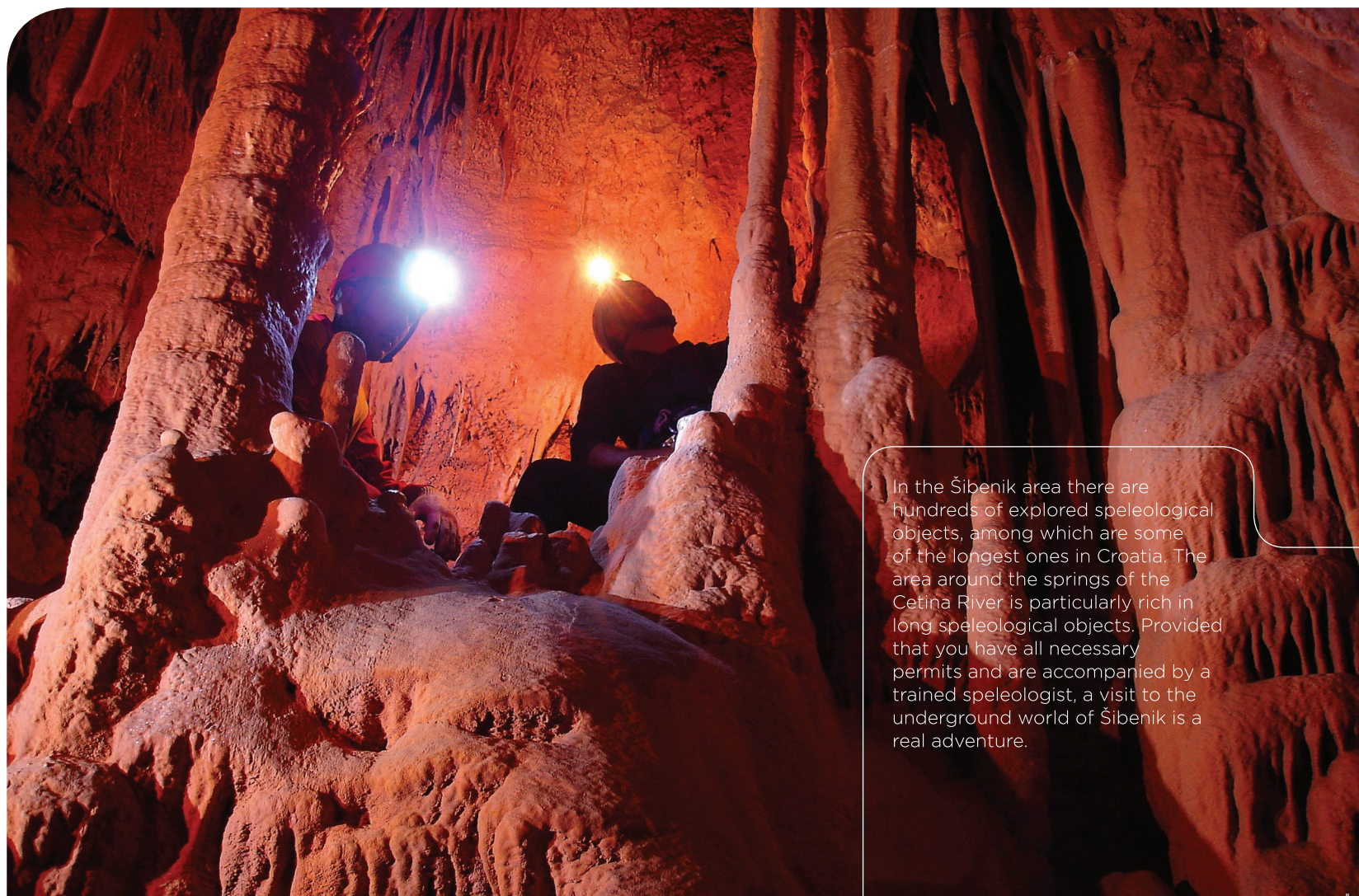
As soon as you reach the river, step into the water and enjoy. Get ready for swimming for about a few hundred metres. Be prepared to jump off the rocks that are 5 metres high, to swim with your rucksack on and with clothes that will get wet and dry several times. At some points you will have to use a rope to descend for 5 or 6 metres. While heading downstream, the Čikola will get even more beautiful, the canyon will become deeper and downhill will become more demanding. Along the entire canyon you will be able to see countless frogs.



A large underwater photograph showing two divers on the left side of the frame, swimming towards a massive, vertical coral reef that dominates the right side. The reef is covered in various types of coral, including branching yellow corals and dense green and blue corals. Bubbles from the divers' breathing apparatus are visible in the blue water. The scene is brightly lit, suggesting a shallow depth.

The underwater world of Šibenik has as many as forty-six sites intended for organised visits of divers. Shallow rocky bottoms covered with algae, sand bottoms, immense meadows of Neptune grass and cliffs overgrown with corals which descend into the depths are landscapes that can be visited with expert help of certified divers.





In the Šibenik area there are hundreds of explored speleological objects, among which are some of the longest ones in Croatia. The area around the springs of the Cetina River is particularly rich in long speleological objects. Provided that you have all necessary permits and are accompanied by a trained speleologist, a visit to the underground world of Šibenik is a real adventure.



Žirje is ideal for cycling as it boasts 22 kilometres of waymarked cycle trails along the entire island. Upon arrival at the island, the trail leads from Muna Cove uphill and then to the marvellous Stupica Cove in the south-east of the island through a centenarian pine forest. While heading northwards, across the rich Žirje Field, the trail goes past the local church and cemetery and then through the old village Žirje. Continuing northwards, the trail leads to Mikavica Cove and Vela Glava Hill, from which there is an awe-inspiring view.







Larger islands are ideal for walking and trekking. One of the best is the island of Žut. Any cove can be chosen as the starting point and your perfect end point should be Gubavac Hill on the island of Žut; from which you can enjoy a stunning view. If you want to visit the island, we recommend that you start from Hiljača Cove and then walk past the Church of St Cross, Strunac Cove, Papeša to Bizikovica or simply from one end of the island to the other.

## GLOSSARY

**Free solo climbing** is a form of free climbing that uses sport and mountaineering routes. The main feature of free solo climbing is that it is gear-independent, the climber forgoes harnesses and other protective gear and relies only on his or her physical strength and climbing ability; climbing gear is used solely as protection against falls. Free solo climbing is practiced on pre-designated routes with pre-placed climbing anchors. Routes are normally 8 – 30 metres long.

**Deep-water soloing** is a form of rock climbing on natural rock formations without any protective equipment. The climber starts climbing literally from water and, since there is no protection, when he or she makes a mistake or is exhausted, he or she falls into water again. Soloing is always referred to as climbing without protection.

**Hiking** is walking along easy to moderate waymarked trails in the countryside. Hiking trails include a wide range of different trails, from narrow mountain paths to wide footpaths. In order to be defined as hiking, an activity needs to include using waymarked trails.

**Trekking** is a moderate to high intensity activity that includes a journey on foot in the countryside along hiking trails which are not waymarked. It often involves demanding terrain where no means of transport is available.

**Canyoning** involves walking through a canyon or along a river course and it includes different activities such as hiking, climbing, jumping and/or swimming. Canyoning also includes technical descent requiring mountain equipment.

**Cycling** is a sport and a form of land transport that uses a bicycle as an exclusively human-powered means of transport.

**Road cycling** is defined as riding a bicycle on categorised roads.

**Mountain biking** involves riding a bicycle off-road, over rough ground, using specially designed mountain bikes.

**Kayaking** is the act of paddling a kayak, for moving along the surface of a body of water such as a river, lake or sea. We refer to sea kayaking if the body of water we move across is sea. A kayak can be inflatable or plastic and they are built for 1-3 people. The paddlers sit one behind the other and they use a double bladed paddle.

**Snorkelling** is a form of underwater diving while equipped with a diving mask and a snorkel.

**Birdwatching** is a recreational activity of observing birds either with the naked eye or through binoculars and telescopes.

## CONTACTS

### Šibenik-Knin County Tourist Board

Fra Nikole Ružića bb  
22000 Šibenik  
Tel: +385 (0)22 219 072  
E-mail: [info@dalmatiasibenik.hr](mailto:info@dalmatiasibenik.hr)  
[www.dalmatiasibenik.hr](http://www.dalmatiasibenik.hr)

### Šibenik Tourist Board

Fausta Vrančića 18  
22000 Šibenik  
Tel: +385 (0)22 212 075  
Fax: +385 (0)22 200 183  
E-mail: [info@sibenik.si.t-com.hr](mailto:info@sibenik.si.t-com.hr)  
[www.sibenik-tourism.hr](http://www.sibenik-tourism.hr)

### Tourist Information Centre

Obala palih omladinaca 3  
22000 Šibenik  
Tel: +385 (0)22 214 448, 214 411

### Drniš Tourist Board

Domovinskog rata 5  
22320 Drniš  
Tel: +385 (0)22 888 619  
GSM: +385 (0)95 968 04 20  
E-mail: [info@tz-drnis.hr](mailto:info@tz-drnis.hr)  
[www.tz-drnis.hr](http://www.tz-drnis.hr)

### Knin Tourist Board

Ulica dr. Franje Tuđmana 24  
22300 Knin  
Tel: +385 (0)22 664 819  
E-mail: [director@tz-knin.hr](mailto:director@tz-knin.hr)  
[www.tz-knin.hr](http://www.tz-knin.hr)

### Rogoznica Tourist Board

Kneza Domagoja b.b.  
22203 Rogoznica  
Tel: +385 (0)22 559 253  
E-mail: [rogoznica@tz-rogoznica.hr](mailto:rogoznica@tz-rogoznica.hr)  
[www.tz-rogoznica.hr](http://www.tz-rogoznica.hr)

### Tisno Tourist Board

Istočna gomilica 1a  
22240 Tisno  
Tel: +385(0)22 438 604, 438 603  
E-mail: [info@tz-tisno.hr](mailto:info@tz-tisno.hr)  
[www.tz-tisno.hr](http://www.tz-tisno.hr)

### Jezera Tourist Board

Put zaratića 3  
22242 Jezera  
Tel: +385 (0)22 439120  
E-mail: [turisticka-zajednica-jezera@si.t-com.hr](mailto:turisticka-zajednica-jezera@si.t-com.hr)  
[www.tzjezera.hr](http://www.tzjezera.hr)