STREET REGISTER

Street	Grid
A	
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B	
Bana Jelačića	B-8,C/D-9,D/E-10
Baranjska - Gradići	A-8/9,B-8/9
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Boškovića, Rudera	C-8,D-7/8
Braće Radića	H-7/8
Braće Radića odvojak	G/H-8
Bratstvo I	D/E-5/6
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Brinjska	H-3,I-3
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Cesarca, Augusta	D-6
Cvetkovića, Antuna	H-6/7
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Č	
Čakovečka	C/D-4
Čužićeva	F-2
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Domjanića, Dragutina	C/D-5
Dubrovačka	D-4
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Đakovačka	C-4
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Jandriševa	E-1/2
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Kirinčića, Boška Franje	G/H-9
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Kn. Ljud. Posavskog	C-4/5,D-5/6
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Kneza Trpimira	G-6
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Kotrmanova	E-2
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Kralja Petra Svačića	E/F-5/6
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Malogorički odvojak	F-7/8
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INTRODUCING VELIKA GORICA

The wide plain immediately south of Zagreb is home to Velika Gorica, a lively town that has become home to a growing number of workers from the city over recent decades. This is also where you'll find Zagreb's airport and a brand-new business district spreading southwards from the capital. Although Zagreb's expansion could be seen as a threat to the integrity of a town like Velika Gorica, the fact is that here you can still easily feel a world away from the capital.

Velika Gorica is just a short hop from the capital, but if you stray a few yards from the town centre you'll find yourself in semi-rural idylls complete with wooden cottages and the odd chicken scratching around. The people of the town are uncommonly friendly, perhaps a reflection of the diverse mix of settlers from many parts of Croatia and abroad which renders improbable any kind of suspicion of outsiders.

Velika Gorica is the capital of the Turopolje region, a region with the status of "noble commune" that was largely self-governing for several centuries until the abolition of feudalism in 1848. Turopolje is characterised by rich oak forests nurtured by the nearby River Sava, Odra and Kupa. This character was expressed for generations by working with wood to create tools, furniture, entire homes and even churches – a noble craft creating satisfyingly solid and often very decorative products, almost everything needed for daily living.

The modern administrative districts of Kravarsko, Pokupsko and Orle were part of the historical district of Turopolje. Pokupsko and Kravarsko are in the south of the region, and are on the gentle hilly ridge of Vukomeričke gorice, while the Odra district runs along the western bank of the river Sava. Wherever you go you'll come across reminders of Croatian folk heritage, from textiles via gastronomy to architecture. The rural way of life still persists, and the countryside is still dotted with the decorative wooden homes of the wealthier citizens.

In the very north of the region there is an archaeologically very interesting area covering some 16 square kilometres which was the site of a Roman town, Andautonia, where a great many remains have been found. But wooden architecture is perhaps the main reason for visiting Velika Gorica. This writer once undertook a hair-raising expedition in driving snow to the mountains of Slovakia to experience the unique beauty of Slavic wooden architecture. To have numerous examples on your doorstep is something not to be taken for granted. You'll find Slavic wooden folk architecture from the Carpathians to the Siberian taiga, but due to natural decay and shameful neglect, good examples are not so easy to come by. So, art lovers, ethnologists and fans of Slavic folklore alike, head for the noble commune of Turopolje, a wonderland in wood!

GETTING AROUND

Public transport

Transporting your person around town couldn't be easier. City buses arrive from the direction of Zagreb, make their way right through the length of town to the central bus station, then head back along a parallel road towards the capital. You can hop on and off anywhere en route. Just stamp a ticket you can buy from a news kiosk (costs 8kn), or from the driver or by sending a text message to (+385) 8585 containing the letters zg (costs 10kn). Your ticket is valid for 30 minutes within this zone, Zone 2. If you travel to Zagreb please stamp a second ticket at Veliko Polje as you'll cross into another zone. The same goes for trips to surrounding villages - please check with the driver.

Taxis

There's a taxi rank at the central bus station. If there's nobody there, simply call 970 or (+385-) 098 31 09 99 and a taxi will whizz up to whisk you away. At the time of writing the prices were as follows, although the impending liberalisation of the taxi market means the prices may come down by the time you read this: Start 19kn, 7kn per kilometre, waiting 50kn/h, luggage 3kn per piece. Night time, Sundays and holidays are charged at 20% extra.

Airport

Zagreb Airport C-1, Pleso bb, tel. (+385-) 060 32 03 20/(+385-1) 456 22 22, www.zagreb-airport.hr. Zagreb's airport is at Pleso, just a few minutes' drive from Velika Gorica. It's connected to a number of European destinations. It's not large but clean and well-run, with good information services, a few ATMs and money exchanges, car rental outlets, a restaurant and cafés. Most Velika Gorica hotels and B&Bs will organise airport pickup for you; otherwise a taxi is probably your best bet - the approximate fare is 50kn. Alternatively, you can hop on the airport bus for Zagreb and travel as far as the junction with the main road, cross over and transfer to a regular bus to town.

GETTING AROUND

Buses

From the central bus station, you can catch the 268 (regular) or 330 (fast) bus service to Zagreb Glavni Kolodvor (main railway station). The earliest bus leaves for Zagreb at 04:00, and between 05:00 and 23:00 there are buses every 20 minutes or so. The journey takes about 25 minutes. The same company, ZET, also operates buses to the villages around Velika Gorica, so if you want to see the sights in Čička Poljana, Donja Lomnica, Lijevi Štefanki, Lukavec or Mraclin, ZET is your man. Check out the timetables on http://www.zet.hr/autobus/dnevni.aspx. Tickets are as for public transport. You might travel through more than one zone, in which case you will need to buy more than one ticket - for trips to Zagreb you need two. Please consult the maps on the bus stops for zones, or try to communicate with the driver through the magic of pantomime. Two further companies, Autoturist and Autopromet Sisak operate routes to the nearby town of Sisak. There is at least one bus every hour between 04:00 and 20:00, and tickets, which cost 25kn, can be bought from the driver. There is a little shopping centre just behind the main bus station with a small market and plenty of cafés and cash machines.

Central Bus Station G-7, Trg kralja P.Krešimira IV bb, tel. (+385-1) 622 13 07/(+385-1) 622 10 46.

Car rental

AMC C-1, Pleso bb, tel. (+385-1) 626 08 00/(+385-1) 290 03 33, zag@amcrentacar.hr, www.amcrentacar.hr. ▸ Open 08:00 - 21:00. [cc]

An Nova C-1, Pleso bb, tel. (+385-1) 456 25 31, reservation@an-nova.hr, www.an-nova.hr. ▸ Open 07:00 - 21:00, Sat, Sun 08:00 - 20:00. [cc]

Last minute rent a car C-1, Pleso bb, tel. (+385-1) 626 51 40, zag@lastminuterentacar.hr, www.lastminuterentacar.hr. ▸ Open 07:00 - 21:00. [cc]

Uni Rent C-1, Pleso bb, tel. (+385-1) 626 01 00, zagreb-airport@uni-rent.hr, www.uni-rent.hr. ▸ Open 07:00 - 21:00. [cc]

Parking

There are two parking zones in Velika Gorica. You can buy tickets in Tisak news kiosks, in Mercator shops or by sending a text message to (+385) 811 for Zone 1, 812 for Zone 2. You need to buy one ticket for every hour you stay and display it in your windshield. An hour's parking in Zone 1 costs 4kn, and 3kn in the second. Parking time is limited to 180 minutes in Zone 1, and 240 minutes in Zone 2. If you are late collecting your car or topping up your ticket you may be dismayed to find a bill for a day ticket, which costs 80kn in both zones. If you need to park for longer, you might be better off heading a short way from the centre out of the pay parking zone.

VG komunalac D-6, Kolodvorska 64, tel. (+385-1) 623 06 60, parking@vgkomunalac.hr, www.vgkomunalac.hr. ▸ Open 08:00 - 15:00. Closed Sat, Sun.

Petrol stations 0-24

Europetrol Velika Gorica I-8, Sisačka bb, tel. (+385-1) 621 97 85, www.europetrol.hr.

Ina Velika Gorica C-5, Ljudevita Posavskog bb, tel. (+385-) 091 497 14 02, www.ina.hr.

Ina Velika Mlaka sjever Zagrebačka bb, Velika Mlaka, tel. (+385-) 091 497 14 04, www.ina.hr.

Road help

Croatian Automobile Club - HAK F-7, Slavka Kolara 48, tel. (+385-) 1987/(+385-1) 622 12 71, ak-velika-gorica@zg.t-com.hr, www.hak.hr. Breakdown and towing service is available 24 hours a day. For road information 24 hours a day dial +385-1 464 08 00; during summer you can hear it on the radio in English, Italian and German.

Trains

The Zagreb-Sisak train line runs through Velika Gorica. Train times are designed to suit commuters, so most are concentrated in the early morning and evening hours. The journey takes about 20min and a single ticket costs 10-16kn. Since the railway station is quite a way from the town centre, you might find the bus more convenient unless you are making an onward rail journey from Zagreb.

Central Train Station B-8, Kolodvorska 151, tel. (+385-1) 453 53 61.

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ARRIVING IN VELIKA GORICA

If you're arriving by plane at Zagreb Airport you're in luck - Velika Gorica is right here. If you've booked accommodation in Velika Gorica please contact them to ask to be picked up - almost all local hotels and B&Bs offer this service as standard. If not, you can hop on the airport bus for Zagreb and travel as far as the junction with the main road, cross over and transfer to a regular bus to town. Arriving by car is simple: from wherever you're travelling head for Zagreb and follow the signs south to the airport. The town centre is just a few minutes' drive further on. Arriving by bus will deposit you at the bus station right in the centre of town, or you can hop off en route. If you arrive by train you'll find yourself a little out of town. Just head along the road leading away from the station, and when you reach the junction with the main road turn right for the town centre. Thus far Shanks's pony was your only option, but from here you can catch a bus.

MAIL & PHONES

Internet places

Central Town Library F-6, Zagrebačka 37, tel. (+385-1) 622 29 48, www.knjiznica-vg.hr. Two computers. 15min/5kn, 30min/10kn, 1h/20kn. ▸ Open 08:00 - 19:30, Sat 08:00 -13:00. Closed Sun.

Tourist Information Centre G-6, Kurilovečka 2, www.tzvg.hr. Free.

Town Library - Galženica branch E-7, Trg Stjepana Radića 5, tel. (+385-1) 622 21 94, galzenica@knjiznica-vg.hr, www.knjiznica-vg.hr. Two computers. 15min/5kn, 30min/10kn, 1hour/20kn. ▸ Open 08:00 - 19:30, Sat 08:00 - 13:00. Closed Sun.

Post

Missing your gang back home? Call into the Tourist Information Centre at Kurilovečka 2 and pick up a postcard for free! Now all you need is a stamp… available from news kiosks and, of course, the post office.

Post office G-8, Ivana Gorana Kovačića 13, tel. (+385-1) 622 21 48. ▸ Open 08:00 - 20:00, Sat 08:00 - 13:00. Closed Sun.

Post office G-7, Trg kralja Tomislava 34, tel. (+385-1) 622 21 28/(+385-1) 622 21 48, www.posta.hr. ▸ Open 08:00 - 20:00, Sat 08:00 - 13:00. Closed Sun.

LEISURE

Day trips

Ključić Brdo Vukomeričke Gorice, tel. (+385-) 098 965 31 44/(+385-) 098 47 76 60, www.kljucic-brdo.hr. Do you like seeing fluffy animals? Do you like eating them? Well, the good news for you is you can do both at Ključić brdo. This is a large restaurant and recreation centre set in glorious countryside 10km south of Velika Gorica. There's a playground and a petting zoo where you can see wild boar, moufflon, deer, pheasant, wild duck, ponies and other domestic animals. ▸ Open Fri 13:00 - 23:00, Sat, Sun 11:00 - 23:00. (50 - 80kn). [P]

Odranski ribič Čička Poljana bb, tel. (+385-1) 623 60 96/(+385-) 098 972 16 07. A large restaurant set in three hectares of land among the forests on the bank of the River Odra. They specialize in meat cooked on the charcoal grill, on a spit or under a *peka* - an iron bell heaped with embers. You might also like to try *fiš paprikaš* - a stew made with freshwater fish and seasoned with paprika. A playground will keep the young'uns entertained while the grown-ups gorge. ▸ Open Tue 11:00 - 23:00. Closed Mon. (50 - 80kn).

Fitness & Gym

Aerobic club BPM Velika Gorica E-6, Matije Slatinskog 5, tel. (+385-) 098 82 19 63, bpm.aerobic@gmail.com. ▸ Open 19:00 - 22:00, Sat 15:00 - 17:00. Closed Sun.

Black Jack Gym G-5, Pleška 46, tel. (+385-1) 622 29 52/(+385-) 091 975 09 68, blackjack_gym@yahoo.com. Also at Kolodvorska 96. ▸ Open 09:00 - 22:00, Sat 10:00 - 21:00. Closed Sun.

Lorena - lady fitness F-6, Zagrebačka 37b, tel. (+385-1) 622 10 72/(+385-) 091 252 69 21, www.lorena-fitness.hr. ▸ Open 09:00 - 12:00, 15:00 - 22:00, Sat 09:00 - 15:00. Closed Sun.

Health

Poliklinika Labor Centar E-5, Zagrebačka 68, tel. (+385-1) 622 42 18, www.laborcentar.hr. Diagnostic laboratory services. ▸ Open 08:00 - 16:00. Closed Sat, Sun.

LEISURE

Poliklinika Zahi E-4, Petra pl.Škrleca 27, tel. (+385-1) 626 68 04, info@poliklinika-zahi.hr, www.poliklinika-zahi.hr. ▸ Open 16:00 - 20:00, Wen 09:00 - 12:00, 16:00 - 20:00, Sat, Sun by request.

Tibia E-4, Petra pl.Škrleca 27, tel. (+385-1) 623 65 05, info@tibia.hr, www.tibia.hr. ▸ Open 08:00 - 19:00. Closed Sat, Sun.

Cycling

The region surrounding Velika Gorica has broad plains, undulating upland areas, forest tracks and country roads which are refreshingly free of traffic, so it's an ideal area for cycling. The Tourist Association of Velika Gorica has two maps (www.tzvg.hr), each with four routes marked, which guide you along some of the most scenic routes, taking you off the beaten track and through the forests, but which are not overly demanding. Pick up copies at the Tourist Association at Kurilovečka 2 in town. Take a look also at www.pedala.hr, a Croatian cycling portal which has online descriptions in English of several routes covering Kravarsko, Pokupsko, Turopolje, Andautonia and a wooden chapels tour. Or head for the Zagreb County Tourist Office where you can also pick up paper maps: Preradovićeva 42, Zagreb (tel. +385 1 487 36 65) open 08:00-16:00, closed Sat, Sun.

Fishing

With so many rivers rushing around, there's plenty of good fishing to be had in the Velika Gorica area. The obvious spots to go for are the River Sava and its backwaters, followed by the Odra, the Kupa and the Čiče lake. The waters are well-stocked and include carp, perch, pike-perch, catfish, tench, pike and chub. You must have a permit.Day permits can be bought from the Sport Fishing Association, ŠRU Odra.

Sport Fishing Association - ŠRU Odra G-6, Trg kralja Tomislava 4, tel. (+385-1) 622 20 82/(+385-1) 624 64 62. ▸ Open January - June 31 Tue, Fri 08:00 - 12:00, 16:00 - 18:00, July -December 31 Fri 08:00 - 12:00, 16:00 - 18:00.

Hunting

The rural surroundings and forests of Turopolje, Posavina and Vukomeričke gorice are an ideal habitat for game of all kinds. You'll find deer, wild boar, rabbit, pheasant, partridge, quail, snipe and wild duck. There are several hunting grounds managed by various authorities. For details, please contact the Tourist Association of Velika Gorica or take a look at their web site: www.tzvg.hr.

Paintball

Paintball VG H-6, Habdelićeva 9, tel. (+385-) 91 589 84 25/(+385-) 95 859 40 18, paintball.vg@gmail.com, www.paintball-vg.hr. ▸ Open by prior arrangement.

Sparta Kurilovec ranch, tel. (+385-) 091 548 96 10, tstepanic@gmail.com, www.paintball-sparta.com. ▸ Open by prior arrangement.

Swimming

In hot weather, the locals might direct you to Čiče lake, a man-made lake created by a nearby gravel quarry. The lake is pretty clean with a shingle beach but swimming there is forbidden by law. The sides of the lake slope very steeply. Ongoing quarrying has created a depth of 50 metres in places, the lake bed is shifting and it is suspected that whirlpools occur which can drag down even strong swimmers. Despite police patrols there are a handful of deaths every year. There has been talk for years about creating a recreational zone with a beach here, but until that happens bathing is prohibited. Nearby Ježevo lake is much smaller and people do bathe there, but again the shore slopes sharply to a 10 metre depth. An alternative is to head south to Pokupsko where there is a good beach on the River Kupa, though as always with swimming in rivers we would advise you to exercise caution and keep a close eye on children.

Tennis

TK Plemenitaš G-5, Ulica kralja S.Tomaševića 21, tel. (+385-1) 621 69 50. ▸ Open April - October 31 08:00 - 24:00, November - March 31 by prior arrangement. 25 - 60kn per hour.

TK Velika Mlaka Ulica Karla Weingartnera 24 (Sport Centre), Velika Mlaka, tel. (+385-1) 623 59 20, 623 59 02/(+385-) 091 626 15 53. ▸ Open 08:00 - 24:00 and by prior arrangement. 40 - 100kn per hour.

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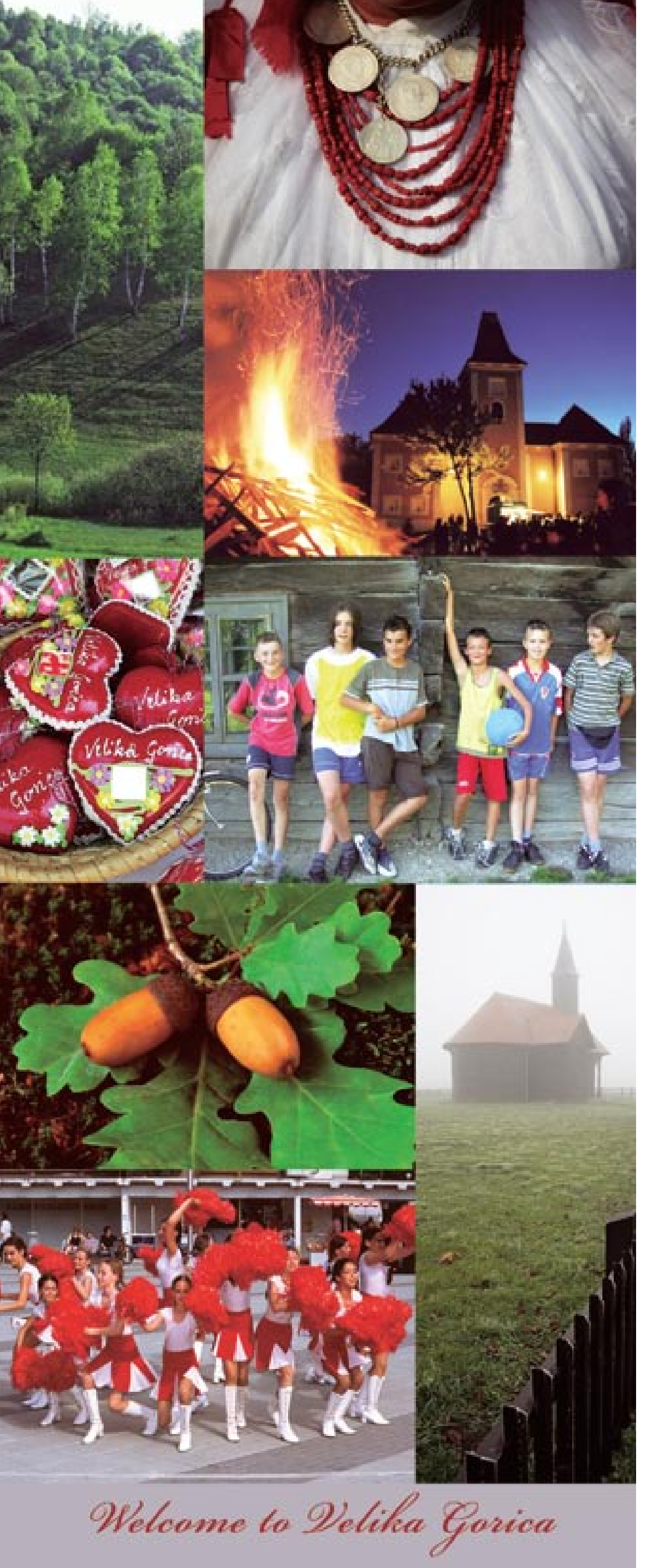
VELIKA GORICA

Map Hotels Restaurants Bars Sights



WHERE TO STAY

Barba Niko G-4, Pleška 125, tel./fax (+385-1) 626 55 73, turopolje. ugostiteljski.obrt@zg.t-com.hr, www.turopolis.com. ▸ 8 rooms (3 singles 300kn, 4 doubles 400kn, 1 triple 500kn).

Bijela ruža G-6, Trg kralja Tomislava 38, tel. (+385-1) 622 13 58, fax (+385-1) 622 14 00, bijela.ruza@zg.t-com.hr, www.sobe-bijelaruza.com. ▸ 17 rooms (12 doubles 250 - 380kn, 5 quads 500 - 600kn).

Divna Zagrebačka 6, Velika Mlaka, tel. (+385-1) 623 47 14/(+385-) 091 623 47 14, 099 623 47 14, divna@zg.t-com.hr. ▸ Open 09:00 - 23:00, Sun by prior arrangement. 8 rooms (4 singles 200kn, 3 doubles 300kn, 1 triple 500kn).

Dream B-6, Fausta Vrančića 12, tel. (+385-1) 621 53 44, fax (+385-1) 621 53 45, info@dreamvg.com, www.dreamvg.com. ▸ 13 rooms (12 singles 299kn, 12 doubles 225kn, 1 apartment 720kn). Prices are per person/per night.

Garni Hotel E-2, Mikulčićeva 7a, tel. (+385-1) 625 36 00, fax (+385-1) 625 36 01, hotel.garni@zg.t-com.hr, www.hotel-garni.hr. ▸ 29 rooms (17 singles 550kn, 10 doubles 750kn, 2 apartments 750kn).
★★★★

Ikar Klarići 46, Rakarje, tel./fax (+385-1) 622 33 02, tel. (+385-) 091 567 28 23, prenociste@ikar.com.hr, www.ikar.com.hr. ▸ 4 rooms (1 double 300 - 400kn, 3 triples 300 - 550kn).

Ivac G-2, Šandora Brešćenskog 1, tel. (+385-) 091 569 35 67, ivac@ivac.hr, www.ivac.hr. ▸ 4 rooms (4 doubles 337kn).

Phoenix Velikogorička 10b, Staro Čiče, tel. (+385-1) 623 03 35/(+385-) 098 45 26 05, fax (+385-1) 623 04 42. ▸ 3 rooms (3 doubles 350kn).

Pleso E/F-2, V.Nazora 8, tel. (+385-1) 626 50 48, zeljka_zdelar@hotmail.com. ▸ 5 rooms (4 doubles 300 - 400kn, 1 triple 300 - 500kn).

Pleška G-5, Pleška 46, tel. (+385-1) 626 52 77/(+385-) 098 194 99 24, bmuzek@globalnet.hr. ▸ Open 06:00 - 23:00.5 rooms (3 singles 300kn, 3 doubles 400kn, 2 triples 500kn).

San I-3, Rakarska 57, tel. (+385-1) 622 70 89, fax (+385-1) 622 31 45, prenociste.san@zg.t-com.hr. ▸ 7 rooms (1 single 250kn, 4 doubles 350kn, 2 triples 450kn).

WHERE TO EAT

Babriga F/G-11, Josipovićeva 56, tel. (+385-1) 621 78 54. A pleasant little place with a rustic interior cheered up by some cosy folk details: lace trimmed table cloths and that kind of stuff. Between 09:00 and 12:00 you can order *gablec* - home-made cooked dish designed as reasonably-priced elevenses for those hungry souls who started work in the early morning hours. If you call ahead they can prepare local specialities for you such as *bijeli žganci* (a satisfying mashed potato dish) or Turopolje soup served in a hollowed-out bread crust. ▸ Open 07:00 - 23:00. €

Bukara F-4, Hrvatske bratske zajednice 41a, tel. (+385-1) 622 45 05. *Konoba* Bukara is decorated in a traditional style with white walls and heavy, dark furnishings. It's set in a residential location convenient for some of Velika Gorica's lodgings towards the airport. The extensive menu includes meat and fish dishes, and there are well-priced lunchtime specials. The cooking is of excellent quality, using fresh ingredients. ▸ Open 08:00 - 22:30, Sun 12:00 - 19:00. (27 - 90kn).

Crni grozd F-7, Kurilovečka 130, tel. (+385-1) 621 82 86. This place has a buffet open between 09:00 and 15:00, where you can eat for 35kn. The menu comprises Croatian classics, mainly meat dishes including grilled cuts. ▸ Open 07:00 - 23:00. (25 - 60kn). €

Gavran Pizzeria D-5, Zagrebačka 122, tel. (+385-1) 622 25 65. This little pizzeria on the ground floor of a residential building is well-liked by the locals and offers good-quality pizzas with a large selection of toppings. ▸ Open 08:00 - 23:00, Sun 10:00 - 23:00. (30 - 40kn). €

Gorička klet H-7, Braće Radić 1, tel. (+385-1) 621 54 44/(+385-) 099 621 54 44, slavko.sajnic1@zg.t-com.hr. A very cute little restaurant furnished in an old-fashioned style but in light colours giving a clean and bright feel. Good home cooking, including lamb and young pork roast over an open fire. There are also meals such as grilled trout for a very reasonable 30kn, and fried battered brains if you fancy dining out zombie-style. ▸ Open 08:00 - 23:00, Sun 10:00 - 18:00. (25 - 60kn).

Gracija Pizzeria E-7, Trg Stjepana Radića 2, tel. (+385-1) 626 88 00. If you fancy a good pizza, a lasagne or a plate salad, head for this cute little pizzeria on Velika Gorica's main square. ▸ Open 10:00 - 23:30, Sun 12:00 - 23:30. (23 - 35kn). €

Grof Malobunska 35, Mala buna, tel. (+385-1) 623 08 30. A restaurant on the road between Velika Gorica and Pokupsko mainly offering meat dishes and pizzas. There's a huge hall which is often used for weddings and other large gatherings. ▸ Open 12:00 - 22:00. (20 - 60kn).

Kaktus E-6, Kolodvorska 12, tel. (+385-1) 622 40 18. A delightful little place with a good choice of Mexican dishes and an extensive pizza menu. Pizzas are cooked in a clay oven. The décor is absolutely charming in warm yellow tones, and there's a small terrace. ▸ Open 08:30 - 23:00, Sun 09:30 - 23:00. (22 - 40kn).

Meto Pizzeria E-5, Zagrebačka 60, tel. (+385-1) 625 29 61. A good place for a quick bite to eat on the hoof, this is a little café which also offers a selection of pizzas and home-made cakes. ▸ Open 07:00 - 23:00. €

Modena H-7, Trg kralja P.Krešimira IV 14, tel. (+385-1) 621 60 69. An excellent choice if you're in need of a filling meal at lunchtime: for 30kn, you get soup, a choice of four main courses, salad and dessert, all home-made. Modena is one of the most pleasantly decorated restaurants in town with muted colours, stone and wood flooring and a nice covered terrace at the back. Lunchtime only. ▸ Open 11:00 - 18:00, Sat, Sun 12:00 - 18:00.

Mon ami H-7, Trg kralja Tomislava 26, tel. (+385-1) 621 33 33. Renowned as the best fish restaurant in town, the fact that Mon Ami is the only fish restaurant in town in no way detracts from this honour. The menu is a roll-call of the classics of Croatian coastal cuisine: fresh fish and shellfish, pasta and risottos, including our particular favourite, black risotto made with squid ink. The wine list is excellent, the service friendly and professional: we think you'll be happy if you make this your choice. ▸ Open 09:00 - 22:30. Closed Sun. (80 - 180kn)

Monument Pizzeria D-7, Andrije Kačića Miošića 67, tel. (+385-1) 622 68 54. A café and restaurant on two floors where you can fill up on pizza (three sizes to choose from), sausages or deep-fried mushrooms. There are some pool tables in the basement where you can work off those calories afterwards. ▸ Open 09:30 - 22:30. (23 - 70kn). €

Pastuh F-3, Hrvatske bratske zajednice 80, Radnik Stadium, tel. (+385-1) 626 54 55/(+385-) 095 626 54 55. Do overlook the rather prosaic location at Velika Gorica's football stadium, for at Pastuh ("the Stallion") you can enjoy man-size portions of well-prepared grilled meat. Comes recommended by the locals, it'll certainly put lead in yer pencil, as our grandmothers used to say. ▸ Open 10:00 - 22:30, Sun 12:00 - 21:30. (30 - 60kn).

Phoenix Velikogorička 10b, Staro Čiče, tel. (+385-1) 623 03 35. A huge restaurant in Staro Čiče, on the way to Sisak. Mainly meat dishes are on offer, including schnitzels and grilled items. Saturday is a big day for weddings, so if you plan to come here it's advisable to call and check they can squeeze you in. If you've overdone it a bit, they even have one room for guests to rest their sleepy heads. ▸ Open 08:00 - 20:00. Closed Sun. (50 - 100kn).

Rustica E-5, Zagrebačka 63, tel. (+385-1) 622 10 86/(+385-) 098 38 50 46. This airy and nicely decorated restaurant has a rather good menu including fish, steaks, risottos and dishes flavoured with fresh truffles. The menu is available in several languages. ▸ Open 10:00 - 22:00. (50 - 140kn).

Tur G-6, Zagrebačka 6. This little hostelry has a small dining room furnished in heavy wood with cosy country-style touches. You'll find a good selection of lunchtime specials at very affordable prices. Choose from the long list of local-style main courses and side dishes, and a filling meal can be yours for as little as 22kn. There's a small terrace out front. ▸ Open 07:00 - 24:00. €

Turopolje H-7, Trg kralja P.Krešimira IV 29, tel. (+385-1) 622 13 21, turopolje.u.o@zg.t-com.hr, www.turopolis.com. A large pub decorated with the heraldry and artefacts of the Turopolje nobles, this is a place to pick up traditional pub fare mainly based around grilled meats with a few pasta dishes thrown in. The pub has for years been much favoured by the locals, but we found the food a bit on the heavy side. The large terrace in front is a good shady spot to sit on a hot day. ▸ Open 10:00 - 22:00. (40 - 70kn).

Zen G-7, Fabijančićeva 1, tel. (+385-1) 622 64 27, www.pecenjarazen.com. With a name like "Zen" you'd be forgiven for thinking this was the local macrobiotic vegan hangout. In fact, it's one of the locals' favourite places for picking up a portion of *ćevapčići* - shish kebab Balkan style, a tasty and filling fast food favourite that has been known to reduce grown men to tears of joy. Other options include hamburgers, chicken and grilled meats. It's just over the road from the bus station. ▸ Open 07:00 - 23:00, Sun 08:00 - 23:00.

Zlatni zmaj G-6, Šetalište Franje Lučića 11, tel. (+385-1) 622 78 89. This little restaurant is decorated in a soothing traditional Chinese style, it's clean and the service is polite. The menu includes all the Chinese classics, with a few more unusual extras such as beansprout salad with prawns and a number of squid dishes. Crispy roast chicken in sweet and sour sauce, and "Gonbao" chicken are among the regulars' favourites. ▸ Open 11:00 - 24:00. (25 - 115kn).

Zvonimir G-6, Kneza Domagoja 16a, tel. (+385-1) 622 62 06. A wide selection of food: pizzas, pasta, risotto, plate salads and local specialities such as home-made oven-baked beans and grilled sausages. It's a simple little place and prices are entirely reasonable. ▸ Open 08:00 - 23:00, Sun 13:00 - 23:00. (26 - 45kn). €

WHERE TO EAT

Desserts

La Dolce Vita E-5, Zagrebačka 60/I, tel. (+385-1) 626 41 88, www.ladolcevita.hr. Whether it's a yummy treat for coffee or cakes for a special occasion, La Dolce Vita can supply you with the sugary goods. Registers high on the Richter scale for deliciousness and freshness. ▸ Open 08:30 - 21:30, Sun 09:00 - 21:30.

Memy F-6, Zagrebačka 22, tel. (+385-1) 621 62 40. An excellent selection of cakes, all made on the premises. The super-friendly owner is most proud of his creation, Velika Gorica Baklava: the Balkan classic reinvented with rich dark chocolate, which melts in the mouth and tastes like pure heaven. This is great place for morning coffee as you'll get a home-made roll free of charge. In the evenings, pizzas and grilled meats are also served. ▸ Open 07:00 - 24:00. €

Mozart F-6, Zagrebačka 16, tel. (+385-1) 621 62 41. A family-run ice-cream and cake parlour, this is an unpretentious little place but has been serving the good people of Velika Gorica for many years with tasty cakes and ice cream. Celebration cakes are made to order. ▸ Open 08:00 - 20:00. €

CAFÉS

Art Cafe F-6, Slavka Kolara 2a, tel. (+385-1) 625 32 39. This little café overlooking a park in the centre of town has a large covered terrace. The radio is usually playing quite softly, so this is a good spot to catch up on a little reading. ▸ Open 07:00 - 24:00, Sun 09:00 - 24:00.

Orange bar G-6, Zagrebačka 11. An excellent place to check your email: there's a laptop which guests are free to use. A spacious café with pleasant conservatory seating. ▸ Open 07:00 - 24:00, Sun 09:00 - 24:00.

Scotch F-6, Zagrebačka 38, tel. (+385-) 098 56 20 26. As the name implies, you can find goodies of Celtic origin here, including a wide choice of whiskies and Guinness on tap. There's a large terrace, while inside is cosy in that pubby dark-wood way. ▸ Open 07:00 - 24:00, Sun 09:00 - 24:00.

Stari Grad G-6, Trg kralja Tomislava 32, tel. (+385-1) 622 21 14. Just across the road from the Turopolje Museum, this is a good place for a morning coffee or to rest up after your tour of your museum. With a more mature clientele than most places, there's no intrusive loud music here.

BY NIGHT

Clubs

Cabaña F-6, Zagrebačka 37. A comfortable bar by day with a lovely big terrace, Cabaña is also one of Velika Gorica's most popular night spots. Not surprisingly, there's a Cuban theme, but as well as house, pop, rock, Latino and Cuban sounds you'll come across the odd Dalmatian a capella night and other one-offs. There are regular live concerts which attract a slightly older audience. There's a good cocktails list and a lively atmosphere. ▸ Open 08:00 - 24:00, Fri 08:00 - 03:00, Sat 09:00 - 03:00, Sun 09:00 - 24:00.

Hyperion G-6, Kneza Branimira 3. In Autumn 2010 Hyperion had a facelift and the upcoming schedule was announced: Friday nights DJ Whistler (commercial house) takes charge, while on Saturdays DJ Marino gives the place a more deep house feel. On Thursday nights there's often live music, and there have been known to be special ladies' nights - sorry, lads, ladies ONLY nights! Keep an eye on the Facebook page for Hyperion Night Bar. ▸ Open 08:00 - 24:00, Thu, Fri, Sat, Sun 08:00 - 02:00.

Klub 100 F-6, Zagrebačka 37. An excellent club in the basement of the People's Open University (Pučko otvoreno učilište), this place runs lively club nights where you might come across anything from 80s, rock, r'n'b, metal, hip-hop, trash and house. Also live appearances by Croatian and foreign bands and DJs. Brilliant layout with cool, colourful décor. A café is open during the daytime. Check out what's on on Facebook. ▸ Open 09:00 - 24:00, Fri 09:00 - 04:00, Sun 09:00 - 23:00.

SHOPPING

Souvenirs

Brigljević Rakijas H-8, Braće Radića 35, tel. (+385-1) 625 28 46/(+385-) 098 921 47 66. A little tasting room where you can try liqueurs and firewaters made at this family distillery. Beautifully packaged, they make superb gifts. Choose from honey, fig or carob, blackberry, strawberry in pear spirit, walnut, lemon, bitter orange or a wild fruit *drijenak* which is like a cross between a cranberry and a sour cherry. There's also a "Hunter's Rakija" made from fruit brandies flavoured with herbs. Please call ahead to book your visit.

SHOPPING

Haluga E-6, Kolodvorska 12, info@haluga.hr, www.haluga.hr. This shop has an excellent selection of souvenirs, both drinkable and otherwise. If you promise to be very, very good you might be allowed to see the beautiful copper still at the back of the shop in which this family of fruit-growers makes its firewaters. Bottles of fruit and honey liqueurs and rakijas are beautifully presented, there's small but well-chosen collection of wines and stylish leather goods made by Croata. ▸ Open 09:00 - 12:00, 17:00 -20:00, Sat 09:00 -15:00. Closed Sun.

Ivančica H-7, Sisačka 11, tel. (+385-1) 622 50 70, www.etno-ivancica.hr. This company specialises in making and restoring folk textiles and wooden objects. They make a delightful range of modern clothing, jewellery and bags using details and motifs from the folk vernacular. You can also browse their collection of tablecloths and curtains woven and embroidered on site in the old-fashioned style, as well as wooden souvenirs. ▸ Open 08:00 - 19:00, Sat 08:00 - 14:00. Closed Sun. €

Maja Radočaj Atelier E-5, Hrvatske bratske zajednice 3, tel. (+385-1) 621 34 64, www.poklon-atelje.hr. In this little atelier you'll find original works by this artist, all inspired by Turopolje themes. Her paintings, ceramics and figurines are wonderful reminders of this part of Croatia. ▸ Open 09:00 - 12:00, 15:00 - 19:00, Sat 09:00 -14:00. Closed Sun.

Turopolje Museum Gift Shop G-6, Trg kralja Tomislava 1, tel. (+385-1) 622 13 25, www.muzej-turopolja.hr. The ground floor of the Turopolje Museum has a selection of high quality souvenirs. You can choose from works by local artisans, a replica of a beautifully carved hemp spindle, replicas of a coin from the Roman town of Andautonia and a of sculpture of the head of Minerva found at Šćitarjevo village. ▸ Open 09:00 - 16:00, Sat, Sun 10:00 - 13:00. Closed Mon.

Zlatarna Křižek E-5, Zagrebačka 64, tel. (+385-1) 622 62 43, www.zlatarna-krizek.hr. This family-run chain of goldsmiths was established in 1935. They have an extensive collection of modern jewellery created in precious metals, coral and pearl, and a wide selection of wedding rings. Two of their collections of traditional jewellery carried away Croatian Chamber of Trades and Crafts prizes for originality and quality. ▸ Open 08:30 - 20:00, Sat 08:30 - 14:00. Closed Sun.

Zlatko Odrčić F-8, Eugena Kumičića 25, tel. (+385-) 091 762 56 40, zlatko.odrcic@gmail.com. A local artist who makes striking art jewellery, souvenirs and installations in silver, copper and brass. His souvenirs of an aurochs, the symbol of Turopolje, won a gold award from the Croatian Tourist Association, while his replica of a bracelet from the Roman town of Andautonia is the official souvenir of the Archaeological Museum in Zagreb. You are welcome to visit his atelier: please phone for an appointment.

DIRECTORY

Banks & Exchanges

Privredna banka G-6, Zagrebačka 12, tel. (+385-1) 636 28 25, www.pbz.hr. ▸ Open Mon, Wed, Fri 08:00 - 15:00, Tue, Thu 12:00 - 19:00. Closed Sat, Sun.

Raiffeisen Bank F-6, Zagrebačka 44, tel. (+385-1) 623 89 00, www.rba.hr. ▸ Open 08:00 - 19:00, Sat 08:30 - 12:30. Closed Sun.

Volksbank D-5, Zagrebačka 80, tel. (+385-1) 622 80 90, www.volksbank.hr. ▸ Open Mon, Wed 09:00 - 18:00, Tue, Thu 08:00 - 16:00, Fri 08:00 - 15:00. Closed Sat, Sun.

Zagrebačka banka F-6, Kralja D.Zvonimira 5, tel. (+385-1) 625 42 00, www.zaba.hr. ▸ Open 09:00 - 16:00, Thu 09:00 - 18:00. Closed Sat, Sun.

Interpreters & Translators

Increatus D-5, Bratstvo 21, tel. (+385-) 098 60 99 89/(+385-) 091 600 11 68, info@increatus.hr, www.increatus.hr. ▸ Open 09:00 - 17:00 and by request. Closed Sat, Sun.

L-office E-6, Kolodvorska 29, tel. (+385-1) 621 66 90/(+385-) 098 967 62 29, l-office@zg.t-com.hr. ▸ Open by prior arrangement.

Real estate

Gorica nekretnine D-5, Zagrebačka 120, tel. (+385-1) 621 93 32/(+385-) 099 555 01 10, info@gorica-nekretnine.com, www.gorica-nekretnine.hr. ▸ Open 09:00 - 17:00. Closed Sun.

Dry cleaners & Laundries

Nina G-6, Kneza Branimira 7, tel. (+385-1) 626 09 01, info@kemijska-cistionica.hr, www.kemijska-cistionica.hr. ▸ Open 07:00 - 20:00, Sat 07:00 - 14:00. Closed Sun.

Symbol key

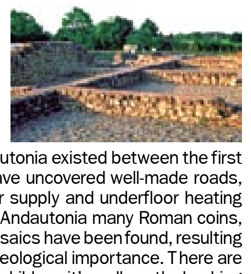
Air conditioning	Credit cards accepted	Live music	Take away	Conference facilities
Child friendly	Facilities for the disabled	Non-smoking areas	Guarded parking	Restaurant
Casino	Animal friendly	Internet	€ No Credit cards	Swimming pool

WHAT TO SEE

Tourist information

TIC G-6, Kurilovečka 2, tel. (+385-1) 622 23 78, tzvg@tzvg.hr, www.tzvg.hr. ▸ Open 08:00 - 16:00. Closed Sat, Sun.

Essential



Andautonia Šćitarjevo, tel. (+385-1) 480 00 09, www.andautonia.com. A few kilometres north of Velika Gorica at today's village of Šćitarjevo, hugged right up in a deep bend in the River Sava are the remains of the Roman settlement of Andautonia. Evidence suggests that this was once a sizeable and important community with influence over a wide area. Andautonia existed between the first and the fourth centuries AD, and excavations have uncovered well-made roads, comfortable homes and public buildings, a water supply and underfloor heating systems, baths and a necropolis. In and around Andautonia many Roman coins, ceramics, glass, jewellery, tablets, murals and mosaics have been found, resulting in a 16km square area being proclaimed of archaeological importance. There are quite a number of activities laid on for adults and children: it's well worth checking out the Andautonia website before planning your visit. ▸ From May 1 - October 31 Open Sat, Sun 12:00 - 18:00 or by appointment. Admission 10 - 15kn.

Lukavec Lukavec. This fort, with its four squat corner towers and a central turret looming over the entrance gates, has at once the naïve feel of a castle from a storybook and the forbidding aura of Dracula's castle, an atmosphere which is nowadays offset by a recent lemon-yellow paint job. Today this place is rather off the beaten track but it was once the centre of public life in Turopolje. Lukavec's roots reach back to the 13th century, but it is thought the fort building dates from the 15th century when the area was increasingly under attack by Ottoman armies. It was originally a wooden structure, today's stone edifice only being built in 1705. The primary role of this building was defensive but the Lukavec fort fulfilled all the functions of a town hall until the building now housing today's Turopolje Museum was erected in 1765. However, all the important documents, seals and property were in safekeeping at Lukavec until 1848, when they were taken to the town hall. The fort's tall central turret houses a chapel consecrated to St Lucy, patron saint of Turopolje, and above the main doors you'll see two lions holding the shield of the Noble Community of Turopolje.

Parish Church of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Crkva navještenja Blažene Djevice Marije) G-6, Šetalište Franje Lučića 25, tel. (+385-1) 622 20 19, zupa.navjestenja.b.d.marije@zg.t-com.hr. This lemon-coloured church is set in a pleasant park in a residential side-street just to one side of the town centre. On its front is the Turopolje coat of arms and a statue of the Saint Lucy, patron saint of the Turopolje region. The church dates back to 1334 when a wooden chapel stood on this site. It was fully rebuilt in stone in the 17th century following an attack by the Ottoman armies and completely rebuilt again in 1880 after a devastating earthquake. Architect Herman Bolle, responsible for some of Zagreb's finest buildings and for its glorious cemetery, was responsible for the design of today's church. The interior is richly decorated and has sky-blue vaults spangled with stars. ▸ Open during mass only.

The Tur

How did the region of Turopolje get its name? Well, the whole area was once under thick oak forests, and among the residents was the ancestor of modern cattle, a mighty beast that went by the name of Bos primigenius, in Croatia known as the Tur and in English as the Aurochs. Turopolje means "the field of the Tur". This magnificent creature is sadly extinct. It was larger than modern cattle, standing about 2m tall at the shoulder, and had lyre-shaped horns pointing upwards and outwards. Aurochs roamed throughout Europe and in parts of Asia, the Middle East and North Africa. It was quite an aggressive animal, and thus killing it was considered a mark of great courage. It is thought that it died out due to hunting, loss of habitat due to the spread of farming, climate change and disease. The last known specimen died in Poland in 1627. Another ancient inhabitant of Turopolje is a species of wild pig, a rather furry chap not quite as fearsome looking as a wild boar. These fellows have the good fortune to be able to feed on acorns, which as any smart pig knows, is a feast fit for a porky king. Sadly, the local Turopolje pigs are on the edge of extinction, but if you're lucky you might spot one snuffling around the forests or wallowing happily in someone's back yard.

WHAT TO SEE

The Forest Clearing Gate (Vrata od krča) Turopoljski lug. Try to imagine yourself standing at Zagreb's Pleso airport surrounded by thick oak forest as far as the eye can see. This is what the countryside here used to look like, in the famous oak forests of Turopolje. The wonderful, durable oak wood was a way of life for the people of Turopolje and it also provided them with a living as they were able to sell it. Thus, the forests were always well tended. However, the need to grow food and provide pasture for animals led to the decision in the 18th century to clear a patch of forest, creating 1600 plots of equal size which were distributed among people in the community. In memory of this gargantuan task, a memorial arch was built in the forest which still stands today - Turopolje's Arc de Triomphe.

Turopolje Museum G-6, Trg kralja Tomislava 1, tel. (+385-1) 622 13 25, muzej-turopolja@muzej-turopolja.hr, www.muzej-turopolja.hr. Housed in a lovely colonnaded building built as the town hall in 1765, the Turopolje Museum houses historical, ethnographic, archaeological and art collections covering the local Turopolje, Posavina, Pokuplje and Vukomeričke gorice regions. In the first room are beautifully worked folk costumes made from locally woven hemp. There's a large loom and a collection of decorative implements used in making yarn from hemp, all in wood as befits this region rich in oak forests. Further on, a display shows what life would have been like in the 30-100 member communes that were a way of life in this area in the 18th and 19th centuries. These homes were simple but cheerful with fabulous wooden furniture and colourful folk textiles. The massive wooden table hewn from a single piece of wood is one of the few survivors of its kind. In the historical section you can learn about the history of the Museum building itself and about the town's history. The archaeological collection includes coins, ceramics and implements dug from the Roman ruins of Andautonia at nearby Šćitarjevo. See the giant oak stump in front, where there's also a lovely park. ▸ November - March 31 Open 08:00 - 16:00, Sat, Sun 10:00 - 13:00. April - October 31 Open 08:00 - 18:00, Sat, Sun 10.00 -13:00. Admision 5kn.

The Horse-Drawn Tram

There was a time when Velika Gorica had a tram line in addition to a railway station and city buses. Some consider the tram came to town in 1910 when the Zagreb tram was electrified and one of the original horse-drawn trams was sold to Velika Gorica, while others say Velika Gorica already had its tram by 1907. But there's no doubt that the old tram was much-loved by the townspeople. It ran from the railway station to the town centre, easing the citizens' journey to the capital and beyond. The line also extended to certain merchants' warehouses and to a distillery in Novo Čiče - a total of 8km. The horse-drawn tram ran until 1937, and its passing was mourned by the publication of an obituary - a characteristically humorous way of the people of Velika Gorica to express their sadness at the passing of a local institution.

Churches

Church of St Anthony of Padova (Crkva sv. Antuna Padovanskog) Bukevje. Built in 1870 in neo-Gothic style, the Bukevje Parish Church is not far from the Zlatarić kurija, and was in danger of suffering a similar fate of dilapidation. In World War II its imposing tower was damaged, and after the war there was no permanent priest here to take care of Church property. That has changed since 2004, and renovations are gradually taking place. One of the main attractions of the interior is an organ from 1860, currently out of use pending restoration.

Church of St Martin the Bishop (Crkva sv. Martina Biskupa) Šćitarjevo. The forebear of this church, built on the site of the Roman town Andautonia, dates back to the 12th century and possibly before. The present-day church was built in 1642, with significant alterations taking place in 1758 and 1768. The church was largely built from blocks recycled from the old Roman buildings in the surroundings - the churchyard is today the site of an archaeological dig. The chapel has a rather magnificent Baroque interior including a Pietà from 1732.

Church of St. Peter the Apostle (Crkva sv. Petra Apostola) Veleševec. The village Veleševec, on the Sava riverbank on the eastern edge of Turopolje, is well known as a rural idyll. There's a small lake that's a haven for wildlife, fishing enthusiasts and those in need of a break from the daily grind. The Parish Church, a large and imposing structure, seems rather incongruous here. The reason it is so splendid is that this was the Austrian Empire's military frontier with the Ottoman Empire, and the authorities wanted to display their might. The church is a harmonious addition to the lovely scenery.

Church of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Crkva Uznesenja Blažene Djevice Marije) Pokupsko. Built between 1736 and 1739, the church was initially dedicated to St Ladislav and in 1982 consecrated to the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary. This is a beautiful example of Baroque architecture, and the church stands as part of a complex with defensive walls with a tower at each corner, a reminder of the times of Ottoman invasions. The complex took a number of direct cannon hits from the Serbs in the recent war, rendering it badly damaged. Fortunately the foresight of Turopolje Museum staff and other brave locals means the inventory was saved. Restoration is currently in progress.

Church of the Three Holy Kings (Crkva sveta Tri Kralja) Donja Lomnica. This church started out life as a wooden votive chapel built in thanks for deliverance from invasion by the Ottoman armies. It is not known exactly when, but it records show that it existed by the first half of the 17th century. The altar is decorated with a painting of the Three Kings. The church gained the status of a parish in 1976 and at that time it was in poor condition. It has recently been restored, creating the fine and spacious church we see today in pure white with an unusual spire.

Church of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Crkva Pohoda Blažene Djevice Marije) Vukovina. This rather lovely church is unusual for the red decorative elements brightening up its white façade. As well as a metal onion-shaped spire, the nave is circular in shape and is topped off with a bell-shaped dome. This pilgrim's church has been here since 1520, and before that a wooden chapel stood on the site. The interior is adorned in Baroque style and contains a miraculous statue of the Virgin Mary.

Wooden architecture

The Turopolje region surrounding Velika Gorica is a veritable wonderland for lovers of wooden folk architecture. The region, irrigated by the waters of three rivers, the Sava, the Odra and the Kupa, is rich in oak trees which for centuries have provided timber for buildings. The simplest, one-storey buildings homes are called *hiže*. Rather grander two-storey homes called *čardaci* are somewhat rarer. At the village of Mraclin you'll find a whole row of *čardaci* with intricately carved stairways and porches. The grandest and rarest homes of the wealthy nobles were called *kurije*. A few of these still survive in Turopolje.

Kurije

Alapić Vukovina. A long, deep-roofed, wooden-framed structure covered with wattles, plaster and some brick used in the ground floor, this building is thought to date from the 15th century. Sadly, the fate of so many historic buildings in this part of the world has befallen it: with multiple heirs, it's almost impossible to reach consensus on required repairs and the result is catastrophic decay. Fortunately, the Croatian Restoration Institute has stepped in to undertake some emergency repairs, and it is to be hoped that the building will be saved in the long term. It is currently being used by one of the co-owners, well-known Croatian sculptor Mladen Mikulin, who has his studio here and has turned the garden into a sculpture park.

Modić-Bedeković Donja Lomnica. Built in 1806 by assessor Petar Modić, this *kurija* is still in the Modić-Bedeković family, which is perhaps why it is the best preserved *kurija* in Turopolje. As was traditionally the case with these two-storey houses, the ground floor is given over to storage and utility rooms, while the living quarters are upstairs. A grand room called the *palača* was reserved for receiving guests, and by all accounts there were plenty of them here, as the Modić's entertained the cream of Croatian literary society. Since this is a private house, sadly you won't be able to see upstairs, although the caretaker might be around and show you the ground floor spaces. The house is still furnished and decorated in 19th century style. The interior walls are plastered.

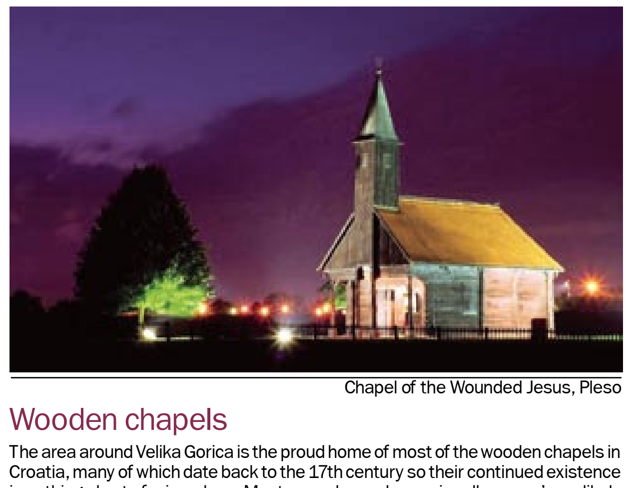
Monument to Fallen Soldiers

Monument to Fallen Soldiers in the Homeland War D-5. Among the war memorials to soldiers in this and other wars in Turopolje is this metal sculpture of a dove by Mladen Mikulin, the very same who lives and works in the Alapić *kurija* in Vukovina. The dove sits atop a stylised recreation of the Forest Clearing Gate in Turopoljski lug.

WHAT TO SEE

This was the home of twin sisters Vilma and Milka Bedeković, born in 1883. Highly educated, especially for their time, both sisters were artistic souls. Milka not only studied art in Paris and Munich and taught at the school for young ladies in Zagreb, she also took part in the public life of Velika Gorica, sitting on the town council. The sisters bequeathed a number of her paintings as well as other artefacts to the Turopolje Museum.

The Rectory Staro Čiče Staro Čiče. Construction started in 1831, funded by parishioners and Countess Erdödy. This fine two-storey building was built by craftsmen from nearby Bukevje. The priests who lived here maintained a tradition of collecting antique books, which in more recent times were transferred to the Croatian Academy of Arts and Sciences.



Chapel of the Wounded Jesus, Pleso

Wooden chapels

The area around Velika Gorica is the proud home of most of the wooden chapels in Croatia, many of which date back to the 17th century so their continued existence is nothing short of miraculous. Most are only used occasionally so you're unlikely to have the chance to peep inside. Please contact the Tourist Association of Velika Gorica for more information.

Chapel of St. Anthony of Padova (Kapela sv. Antuna Padovanskog) Gustelnica. This chapel is much more delicate in construction than its cousins as it was not designed or built by Turopolje craftsmen. Although there has been a chapel here since 1678, the last rebuilding was in 1888 and at that time the architect was German-born Herman Bollé, who was also responsible for working on many of the great public buildings in Croatia including the fabulous cemetery at Mirogoj, Zagreb. The interior walls are decorated with floral motifs similar to those found on the folk dress of the region.

Chapel of St. Barbara (Kapela sv. Barbare) Velika Mlaka. The Chapel of St Barbara is known as the Turopoljska ljepotica, or "Turopolje Beauty". Built in an unusual asymmetric shape which evolved as parts were added over the centuries, construction started in 1692, although a church had been standing there for long before that. The whole chapel is rendered in dark stained wood, right down to the shingles on the roof and steeples, giving it a brooding air. It's a simple construction with two steeples and touches of decorative folk carving. The interior walls are covered with wooden panels which are beautifully decorated with floral motifs and images of saints as was usual for Turopolje chapels. The Rectory alongside the church is an original *čardak* which was brought here from Mraclin. Together with a little wooden granary, this makes a beautiful complex in the peaceful heart of the village.

Chapel of St. Elijah (Kapela sv. Ilije) Auguštanovec. This tiny chapel was built at the beginning of the 20th century, widened and renovated in 1975. It stands on the site of its predecessor, which was built in 1713.

Chapel of St. George (Kapela sv. Jurja) Lijevi Štefanki. One of the oldest and most valuable chapels in the Velika Gorica region, this chapel is rather well-travelled, having been transferred here early in the 18th century from another location. Its floorplan is very close in design to that of the original 17th century wooden chapels. It rests on a stone platform, the corner joints of its rustic body cut in the rough old-fashioned "Croatian" style. Atop a deep sloping roof sits a tall bell-tower covered in shingles, while the sacristy is in an added-on part at the back adding to the impression of the length of the church. The interior is furnished in an old-fashioned, rustic style and abounds in 18th century floral paintings.

WHAT TO SEE

Chapel of St. John the Baptist (Kapela sv. Ivana Krstitelja) Lukinić Brdo. This little chapel is built on the site of an earlier one dating back to 1660 and demolished in 1867. A brick chapel was built in its place, but it was poorly built and didn't last long, so another wooden successor was reinstated. It was built by local craftsmen from Čička Poljana.

Chapel of St. John the Baptist (Kapela sv. Ivan Krstitelja) Buševec. A dark wood chapel with a mushroom- shaped spire, set a tiny churchyard shaded by yew. The chapel is not in the best state of repair, but the mossy shade and the quiet lend a most pleasing air. Architecturally it most interesting, having inspired the building of many chapels in Turopolje. The dates on the bell and a chalice indicate this church has been standing since 1662. Like all of the wooden chapels several reconstructions have been necessary, but in this case some very old features are still visible. The interior is beautifully decorated with rustic paintings but also in desperate need of restoration.

Chapel of St. Peter and St. Paul (Kapela sv. Petra i Pavla) Cerje Pokupsko. Built in 1932 by local master craftsmen who gave the porch beautiful carved decorations of the same type that they created for local homes made in wood in this area. The otherwise simple building also has a touch of folklore painting on the frontage along with the dedication and year of building. Inside, a 17th century altar suggests the earlier origins of the chapel.

Chapel of St. Rocco (Kapela sv. Roka) Cvetković Brdo. The date engraved on the bell of this little chapel is 1671, and the chapel was first mentioned in canonical records in 1677. It was rebuilt in 1720, 1888 and 1913. The chapel is raised on bricks and the façade is covered in shingles, which are light in colour. Originally, Turopolje churches were built in untreated wood, but many of them are now given a coating to protect them from the elements.

Chapel of the Holy Spirit (Kapela Duha Svetoga) Lučelnica. Sitting solitary on a little hilltop a short way from the village, this well-kept little church has a prettily-carved porch, a spire covered in shingles and a terracotta roof. It was first mentioned in 1678, and rebuilt several times. The last significant rebuilding was in 1935. The key is kept in the bar "Bistro Sunčev zrak" in the village.

Chapel of the Holy Trinity (Kapela sv. Trojstva) Gladovec Pokupski. Built in 1847, this is one of the largest chapels in the region. It was built on a hill overlooking the village on the site of an older chapel. It has a fine altar and pulpit in the Rococo style which was probably donated by another church dedicated to the Holy Trinity.

Chapel of the Wounded Jesus (Kapela ranjenog Isusa) Pleso. Built in 1757 as a votive chapel by local noblewoman Rozalija Plepelić, this little chapel stands curiously isolated in the middle of a field within sight of the control tower of Zagreb Airport. A neat little structure in dark wood with a terracotta roof, the most striking part is the intricately carved porchway topped off with a little belltower. The chapel has brick foundations and a stone-flagged floor; inside there's a carved wooden Way of the Cross and the interior is decorated with colourful paintings. Mass is heard here on Sunday mornings.

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ESSENTIAL CITY GUIDES

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CULTURE & EVENTS

Turopolje Carnival (February) Croatia is a country where winter carnivals are held to celebrate the coming of Spring. People spend ages perfecting their fancy dress costumes, which are sometimes quite fearsome in appearance to chase away the evil spirits of winter. However, mostly people just have fun on their minds, and this is a jolly occasion with plenty of opportunities to eat and drink which are well worth taking before Lent arrives! The main festivities take place during the weekend just before Ash Wednesday.

Turopolje Race (March) In 2011 the Turopolje Spring Half Marathon will be celebrating its 19th anniversary. Both locals and guests of all ages from far and wide take part. As well as the 21km course there's a 5km run and races for schoolchildren.

St George's Day (April) Once April arrives, Spring is really getting into its stride in this part of the world, and 23 April, St George's Day, is the day when cattle were traditionally put out to pasture, sometimes garlanded with spring flowers, and the work in the field begins. This has always been a time of great celebration, and there are few better places to experience the festivities than Turopole. Thousands of people turn out onto the streets and squares, bonfires are lit and songs are sung. An especially big party takes place at the heart of the old Noble Commune, Lukavec Castle.

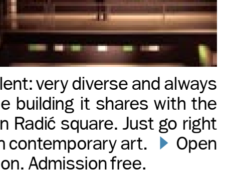
Spring Fair (May) This fair is a great place to sample traditional, locally grown and organic foods, to learn about traditional crafts and folklore and to pick up a souvenir or two.

Gastro Turopolje (October) Gastro Turopolje is a celebration of local cuisine which culminates in Gastro Week, when the restaurants of Velika Gorica and Turopolje have special dishes on offer at special prices. On the final day of Gastro Week, in the yard in front of the Secondary School Centre at Ulica kralja S. Tomaševića 21, local restaurateurs gather and prepare a feast of specialities for your nibbling pleasure. Chefs from other parts of Croatia often make guest appearances. As well as food and drink you can enjoy live music and browse souvenirs and local handcrafts.

St Martin's Day (November) On 11 November, or St Martin's Day (in Croatian "Martinje"), the grape must is "baptised" and turned into wine in a jovial ceremony complete with a "priest" and all manner of high jinks. If you chance upon a good St Martin's Day party in Turopolje, you may feast on goose, since that was the wicked creature that betrayed St Martin, who hid in a stable to avoid being proclaimed bishop. We're not sure why as we guess it must be rather nice to be a bishop, but that's how the legend goes.

St Lucy's Day (December) St Lucy is the saint protector of Turopolje, and her saint's day falls on 13 December. On this day Velika Gorica also holds its annual town celebration. Expect all manner of festivities during the week in which St Lucy's Day falls, adding to that Christmassy sense of expectation in Velika Gorica.

Galleries



POU Galženica Gallery E-7, Trg Stjepana Radića 5, tel. (+385-1) 622 11 22, galerija.galzenica@globalnet.hr, www.galerijagalzenica.info. The gallery of the People's Open University is an excellent space for contemporary art. There are usually six to eight exhibitions per year, covering all months except August. The subjects and artists are excellent: very diverse and always challenging. The gallery is on the first floor of the building it shares with the library at the back of the large, 60's style Stjepan Radić square. Just go right upstairs, and enjoy a good introduction to Croatian contemporary art. ▸ Open 10:00 - 19:00, Sat, Sun 10:00 - 13:00. Closed Mon. Admission free.

People's Open University

F-6, Zagrebačka 37, tel. (+385-1) 625 98 00, info@pouvg.hr, www.pouvg.hr. Velika Gorica's institute of adult education, the People's Open University (Pučko otvoreno učilište) is a veritable hub of cultural life in the town. Thanks to a very talented and energetic former head of the institute, the theatre, Scena gorica, has developed an excellent reputation. The town's cinema is also here, and the newly opened Klub 100 is designed as a hotspot for social, educational and activist gatherings for the local and wider community. The club has a great café and the central town library is here, so it's worth popping along. There is another branch of the library at Trg Stjepana Radića 5, with the Galženica gallery upstairs.