



Dalibor Cvitković, the Town of Mali Lošinj Tourist Board Director

There Are no "Accidental" Projects

In the development of tourism in Lošinj, outdoor activities and maritime tradition are the basis of new products whose realisation includes modern scientific knowledge and new technologies

There is a systematic approach to tourism on the island of Lošinj and a consensus of all carriers of tourism development. So every next step contributes to the same developmental goal, firmly based in values of the region and its long tradition. Dalibor Cvitković, the Town of Mali Lošinj Tourist Board Director spoke about these topics for professional magazine Hospitality and Tourism.

BIKE PATHS - A COMPREHENSIVE PROJECT

This year, in cooperation with the Swiss company Bike Plan, we created a Cycle Tourism Master Plan for Cres and Lošinj. The idea is for Lošinj to become a bike-friendly destination in the next ten years, which

would include re-directing the existing cycle traffic, organising a new traffic regime, and making tourist attractions more accessible to cyclists. The principal task is building five trail centres as a new motive for visiting in pre-season and post-season, with the aim of higher utilization of the existing natural features and year-round business. We continue to develop in the direction of outdoor activities.

There are plans to build an outdoor centre in the future, which will include the project of a cableway to Osorčica, a nearby hill. The Cycle Tourism Master Plan encompasses all islands, smaller villages as well as the interior of the island in order for bike paths to connect small

rural places and contribute to the increase in their population. It is well-known that recreational cyclists are among best consumers because they choose active holiday, they want to get to know the island, try authentic products and see unexplored areas.

CRES AND LOŠINJ, A SINGLE DESTINATION

Even though from the administrative point of view, Cres and Lošinj are two local self-government units, visitors see them as one single destination. This is the way they are treated in the development strategy of the Cycle Tourism Master Plan for Cres and Lošinj until 2025. It involves two tourist boards and two



cities, tour operators and all those who take part in creating a tourism product. Our primary concern is to create a joint recognisable brand of a single area, which is the way visitors perceive as. Regarding the products, we will develop separate tourism products as well, such as outdoor activities, gastronomy and cultural offer.

There are two world attractions in our area. Beli Visitor Centre and Rescue Centre for Griffon Vultures which is active in the field of protection and bird watching; and the Blue World Institute of Marine Research and Conservation with their program of dolphin watch-

ing. These two centres are now connected because one ticket is valid for both.

MARITIME HERITAGE

In recent years we have given a lot of attention to bringing maritime heritage of the island of Lošinj to life. The island used to be the third largest port in the Adriatic and a centre of shipbuilding. In September we dedicate a three-week festival to this tradition, entitled 'Lošinj Sails around the World'. Within the framework of the festival there are four regattas, evenings, exhibitions, concerts, workshops, open-air re-enactments and much more. The Tourist Board

also participated in the international EU project 'Mala barka' in which a traditional sailboat, a lugger was renovated. It became an open-air interpretation centre, one of a kind in the Adriatic. The 22-metre sailboat called Nerezinac was restored to resemble the local lugger ships from the late 19th century. It is moored at the Riva Lošinjskih kapetana in front of the Museum of Apoxyomenos. In a modern, multimedia, interesting, and interactive manner, the lugger presents and interprets the long and rich maritime history of the island of Lošinj. It can sail, powered by the wind and engine so it can be used in regattas and similar events.



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THE STORY ABOUT THE ISLAND OF LOŠINJ PRESENTED IN A NEW WAY

In the Town of Osor, which connects the islands of Cres and Lošinj, we combine an archaeological site and digital technology in a unique way. This will allow us to convey what Osor, the former capital of the island, used to look like. Owing to augmented reality, visitors will be able to experience the history of the town told in a vivid and fascinating way. This is a joint project with the Lošinj Museum, and we expect visitors to go on the first forty-minute walk very soon, in summer 2020. We also created conceptual design for the reconstruction of three vantage points. We would like them to undergo tourist valorisation so that visitors can enjoy magnificent views in a special way.

ALL ASPECTS OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Lošinj has made the Top 100 Sustainable Destinations List four years in a row, and at this year's ITB in Berlin it was declared the third sustainable destination in Europe. This is even more significant since Lošinj, together with Zagreb, will host the "World's Top 100 Sustainable Destinations" event. The first part of the conference will be held in Zagreb, and then it will be transferred to Mali Lošinj. The Town of Lošinj Tourist Board will host a gala dinner during which destinations from around the world will be awarded certificates.

Five years ago Mali Lošinj joined the ETIS project - the European Tourism Indicator System for Sustainable Destinations. Indicators of the impact of tourism on a destination are measured as a part of this system, which is very helpful in planning tourism activities, managing

resources and responsible relationship towards nature and the community. The aim is to become an energy independent island which uses renewable energy sources in future.

According to ETIS, local products account for only 3.5 to 4 per cent of the overall tourism expenditure. This number is not so low because hotel chains, camps and caterers are unwilling to purchase local products, but because for locals, tourism is more financially attractive than agriculture. However, we are planning a broader participation of local economy in tourism in future so we are hoping that tourism will become a factor of multiplication for other industries on the island.

SCIENCE SUPPORTS TOURISM

We commissioned a study from DHMZ, Croatia's Meteorological and Hydrological Service, about the influence of climate on certain outdoor activities in tourism for the period between 2021 and 2050. Generally speaking, summers will become increasingly warmer and outdoor activities will be possible during a longer period in a year. Scientific knowledge will certainly help us in making some decisions and planning future activities.

In cooperation with all stakeholders in tourism, we do not make any ad hoc decisions, but use scientific knowledge, study examples of positive practice and only then do we implement them in our own way, adjusted to our needs. However, what is important is that tourism policy does not change and that we have a continuous development. Every next step contributes to a jointly agreed goal, said Dalibor Cvitković, the Town of Mali Lošinj Tourist Board Director. ■

