

## **THE ISLAND OF RAB**

It is hardly surprising that the island of Rab was one of the first tourist oases on the southern Adriatic. Thanks to its mild Mediterranean climate and vegetation, its sunny coast with its many bays, its azure sea and its natural beauty spots, as well as the ancient culture and variety of civilisations from antiquity until the present day, Rab has always had much to offer tourists.

For all the aforementioned reasons, in 1889 the local council declared Rab a tourist destination and thermal spa. This declaration was made on the basis of the favourable climate and its positive effect on heart conditions and on the respiratory organs. Not long after the birth of tourism on Rab, construction began on the first hotels.

The beautiful beaches of Rab were a favourite of tourists even 120 years ago. The varied landscape of the island of Rab is impressive and makes it unique among the Adriatic islands. Contrasts are apparent all over the island, whether when walking, taking a boat ride along the shore, diving in the surrounding bays or seeing it from a bird's-eye view during a flight over the island.

Almost 120 years ago the traditionally hospitable folk of the island of Rab decided that tourism would be the way in which they would guarantee their future and that of the coming generations. Since then, Rab has won numerous awards as the best tourist destination in the Adriatic. Tourism became a part of every home.

The people of Rab are today proud and delighted to continue the tradition of hospitality. With much love and effort, the people of Rab continue to develop their tourism with increasing success.

This information brochure has been prepared in the hope that it will awaken your curiosity. It has been designed as a guide through the beauty and uniqueness of our beautiful island, and we hope that you will pass this on to others who are interested. In the name of all the tourist workers of Rab, we wish you a warm welcome!

Welcome to the island of Rab



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## **THE ISLAND OF RAB - REFERENCES**

### **The Plavi Cvijet (the Blue Flower) and the Turistički cvijet(Flower of Tourism) Award for the Town of Rab**

At the Plavi Cvijet 2004 competition, the Croatian National Tourist Board awarded the town of Rab first prize for quality in tourism. In 2005, Rab won second prize in the same competition, while Trg svetog Kristofora (St. Christopher's Square) was declared the most beautiful square. The Rab Cake, which has been a speciality of the island for more than 800 years, was declared the most original souvenir.

The island of Rab has also won second place in the Turistički cvijet (Flower of Tourism) competition.

In 2006, in the category for best – kept town, Rab was awarded second place. First place in the Blue Flower award for best-kept tourist town with a population of up to 10 000 went to Rab in 2009. year . Blue Flower Award in the category of the best developed tourist town with up to 10.000 inhabitants – First Place: the town of Rab, in 2010. year.

### **Silver Flower of Europe award for the Town of Rab**

The European Association for Flowers and Landscape, which has been active 30 years now, and is supported by the European Union, awarded Rab the Entente Florale, and the Silver Flower of Europe. For four years now, Croatia has been the only non-European Union member country to be a member of this prestigious organisation. The committee of the European Association for Flowers and Landscape awarded the town of Rab as the best Croatian entrant so far. There have been indications that Rab may receive the highest recognition, the Golden Flower of Europe.

### **The "Cote d'Emerald" of the island of Rab**

Austrian naturalist Camillo Morgan visited the island in 1889, 1904 and 1909 and published his notes in scientific journals. He also published a brochure titled The Island of Rab, its Hunting Grounds and Game, where he writes (quote from the translation),

"...the sea in ten or so beautiful bays on the western part of the island has a special colour which in places becomes an emerald-green colour. If the coast of Italy and France deserves the name Côte d'Azur, then the Croatian coast should be called the Côte d'Emerald. Until our next meeting, when in your brilliance and riches you will become the most beautiful pearl in the Illyrian crown."

### **Members of royal families who have visited the island of Rab**

Prince Alois of Liechtenstein visited the island in May 1910. Impressed by the beauty of the island, and especially by the Komrčar park, he financed the building of a promenade.

Edward VIII with his future wife Wallis Simpson and their entourage was the most famous visitor to the island of Rab. Their yacht, the Nahlin, weighed anchor on the 11th August 1936 off the town of Banjol. The king and his entourage came by rowing boat to Rab harbour and, in the company of officials of the town of Rab, visited the major cultural and historic sights of the town. After this, the king and Lady Simpson bathed in a small bay called Kandarola on the Frkanj peninsula.

### **Location and travel**

The island of Rab is in the Bay of Kvarner around 105km from the port city of Rijeka at the foot of the Velebit mountain range.

If you head for the island from Jablanac by ferry, you will see the bare face of the island. The trip will take around 12 minutes and the ferry sails almost every hour. The fantastic scenery surrounding the Mišnjak ferry dock will remind you of some unpopulated planet. But do not let this side of the island fool you, since Mišnjak and Kamenjak, whose steep slopes are the first thing seen by tourists arriving from the mainland, are lashed by winter sea-storms from Velebit. It is this bare hill which actually protects Rab from cold winds.

### Ferry connections

1. Jablanac - Mišnjak – the whole year round - car ferry
  - 14 services per day, from 05.45 to 24.00 (months: Jan, Feb, Mar, Apr, May, Oct, Nov, Dec)
  - 17 services per day, from 05.45 to 24.00 (months: Jun, Sep)
  - 23 services per day, from 03.30 to 24.00 (months: Jul, Aug)

Carrier: Rapska plovidba - [www.rapska-plovidba.hr](http://www.rapska-plovidba.hr)

2. Valbiska - Lopar – Valbiska – the whole year around - car ferry
  - 4 services per day, from 06.00 to 20.00

Carrier: Linijska nacionalna plovidba - [www.lnp.hr](http://www.lnp.hr)

3. Rijeka - Rab - Rijeka - all year round - catamaran ferry
  - one return trip daily. Departs Rab, am and arrives Rijeka, pm

Carrier: Jadrolinija - [www.jadrolinija.hr](http://www.jadrolinija.hr)

### CLIMATE

Rab enjoys a warm Mediterranean climate with warm summers and mild winters and 2500 hours of sunshine annually.

Rab is thus one of the sunniest parts of Europe.

- warm summers with an average temperature of 23.7 °C.
- mild winters with an average temperature of 7 °C.
- average mean temperature of 14.9 °C
- bathing temperature from May to October is above 20 °C
- average water temperature is 16.7 °C

The most frequent winds are the cold bura and the warm jugo. Snow is rare.

### Water

The island of Rab has more than 300 sources of drinking water.

### TOWNS

#### THE TOWN OF RAB

We cannot speak of Rab and not mention the legend of St Christopher, patron of the diocese and later of the whole island, whose relics are jealously preserved to this day by the people of Rab. Then there are St Marinus – founder of the Republic of San Marino – mathematics professor, theologian, physicist, bishop and archbishop, Marco Antonio de Dominis, and all the living island legends and personalities. Rab was a Roman settlement, awarded the status of a town by Emperor Octavian Augustus who pronounced it a municipium 10 years before Christ. It is the duty of us islanders to ensure that they are not forgotten, together with all the values of our civilisation

that we will talk about later, for Rab is an island of long memory, a town of living history. We also cannot speak of Rab and not mention the three beautiful town parks and the quartet of bell towers which have for centuries stood guard over the town, and which differentiate it from lesser towns. As always, looking back to the past illuminates our present, and that of all the picturesque places on the island: Barbat, Banjol, Kampur, Mundanije, Palit and Supetarska Draga, which with their unique characteristics, hospitable islanders and tourist services draw in everyone who visits.

## **BANJOL**

A tourist village close to and with a view of the old town centre, known for its sandy inlet beaches – Padova I, II and III – and also featuring the Lungo Mare promenade, and especially its rich cuisine, eco-friendly farm products, wide assortment of accommodation and in the midst of it all the proud figure of its patron St Lucia. Also, on the Šištovica holiday (festival of Our Lady of the Snow), celebrated on the 5<sup>th</sup> August, visitors can expect traditional entertainment and culture.

## **BARBAT**

When you get off the ferry, the first place that awaits you is Barbat, recognizable for its pebble beaches, rich fishing tradition, good restaurants, eco-friendly farm products, small boat building and above all its tourism. This town is heaven for lovers of the sea on a small scale. Those interested in the history of Barbat can take a trip to the ruins of an old Christian Greek military fortification on St Damien's Hill, while on 16<sup>th</sup> July, the holiday known as Karmenica (Our Lady of Mount Carmen), guests and locals alike can revel in the delicacies that are Barbat's fruits of the earth and the sea.

## **KAMPOR**

One of the villages to have best preserved the appearance of an old fishing village, nestling in the abundance of the Dundo Forest nature reserve on the Kalifront peninsula, an oasis for hikers and bikers, with its variety of stone and sandy beaches, eco-friendly farm products and good restaurants. All this is Kampur – a charming play of old and new, just what the modern man is looking for.

Particularly unique to Kampur is the Franciscan monastery of St Euphemia, patron of the parish and village, with its ethnographic museum, gallery of the works of Friar Ambroz Testen, one of the oldest stores of written Croatian works in this part of the Adriatic, while for the Magdalenino (Our Lady Magdalene) holiday, Easter Monday and the 16<sup>th</sup> September on St Euphemia's Day, we can all enjoy the cultural events and entertainment put on in the village.

## **MUNDANIJE**

What Umbria is to Italy, Mundanije is to the island of Rab – a village situated in the central area of the island, the only one with no direct access to the sea. It draws people in with its tranquillity and healthy, untouched natural surroundings and organic farm produce, while one of the main attractions is the path leading up to the highest peak on the island, called Kamenjak, from which a beautiful panorama extends over almost the whole island. On the St Matthew holiday, celebrated on 21<sup>st</sup> September, visitors can expect traditional entertainment and culture.

## **PALIT**

The youngest place on the island, right next to the old town centre itself, known for the shopping to be done in the Poslovni Centar, good restaurants, proximity to the town's stony beach called Škver and the peninsula Frkanj, favourite bathing spot of guests of Rab and to the oldest naturist beach in the Adriatic, in the Kandalora bay.

## **SUPETARSKA DRAGA**

One of the oldest island villages, with a particularly rich nautical tradition, surrounded by nearby islets full of sandy and pebbly beaches, good restaurants, traditional produce, accommodation on land and sea and everything the small-scale mariner might need.

Supetraska Draga is home to the oldest Benedictine convent on the island and to the Church of St Peter, which with its beauty attracts both the faithful and lovers of art, while on St Peter's Day (29<sup>th</sup> June), the Dražani, as the locals are known, will surprise you with a programme of culture, sports and entertainment.

## LOPAR

Lopar and San Marino - the northernmost and most distant points from the town of Rab on the island (13 km). Lopar is a well-known destination - a natural phenomenon with its 22 sandy beaches. One of these, the famous Rajska plaža, is more than 1.5km long and is adjoined by the San Marino camp site. After this comes the San Marino hotel complex, as well as a sports and leisure centre, with facilities for various types of sport, tennis courts and night-clubs.

## TOURIST FACILITIES

### Accommodation

The numerous hotels, two campsites, two ACY marinas, boarding-houses, villas, apartments and rooms in private houses all offer varying types of high-quality accommodation. Most of the hotels and the campsites belong to the largest hotel company, Imperial. As well as these, there are several more large and small newly-renovated hotels on Rab. This dynamic and comprehensive development has been possible due to the growth in the entrepreneurial spirit of Rab in the last few years. Many of the people of Rab see a future in tourism and so are investing in the renovation and construction of hotels, boarding-houses and apartments, and so the range of accommodation is becoming better and more varied.

### Hotels – 7 hotels - 1800 beds

**1. The Padova \*\*\***, 175 rooms, 350 beds, air-conditioned rooms, conference hall "Arba", indoor pool, wellness facilities, outdoor pool The hotel's balconies enjoy a wonderful view of the historic Old Town and its bell towers. The Old Town is around 10 minutes' pleasant walk from the hotel along the seaside promenade.

**2. The Imperial \*\*\*\***, 134 rooms, 260 beds, air-conditioned rooms, 3 tennis courts  
A newly-renovated, older hotel, very close to the Old Town. Komrčar park stretches around the hotel, with its centuries-old pine trees and palms.

**3. The Carolina\*\*\*\***, 140 rooms, 280 beds, air-conditioned rooms, outdoor pool, 3 tennis courts  
5km from the town of Rab. Situated in a dense pine wood next to the sea.  
There are numerous walks and cycle paths in the beautiful surrounding area, as well as picturesque beaches and a clean, azure sea which guarantees enjoyable bathing. Newly-renovated hotel and rooms, with a view of the sea.

**4. The Hotel International \*\*\***, 120 rooms, 240 beds, air-conditioned rooms, pool  
This newly-renovated hotel is situated in the middle of the historic Old Town.

## **5. The Istra \*\*\***, 100 rooms, 200 beds

Hotel Istra, on the island of Rab, is situated in an ideal location, on one side next to the entrance to the town park, on the other at the beginning of the town' seaside promenade, just a few metres from the old town walls.

## **6. The Epario \*\*\***, a modern, newly-renovated hotel in Lopar, suitable for families.

## **7. The Arbiana \*\*\***, 28 rooms, 60 beds

Arbiana is an ideal hotel for those who seek perfect balance between quality service hospitality. Situated by the sea in the enchanted old town of Rab, hotel Arbiana borders with charmed Mediterranean park Saint Marino.

## **8. The Eva\*\***, 198 rooms, 400 beds, 4 tennis courts

5km from the town of Rab. Situated in thick pine woods, 5 minutes from the beach and 15 minutes from the naturist beach. The beautiful, green Mediterranean surroundings offer numerous walking and cycle paths. Picturesque beaches and a clean, azure sea guarantee enjoyable bathing. The hotel is simply appointed.

## **Tourist villages - 1806 beds**

- Suha Punta \*\*\*/\*\*, 10 villas, 48 apartments, 40 bungalows, total: 349 beds.

5km from the town of Rab. Situated in thick pine woods, around 5 minutes from the beach and around 15 minutes from the naturist beach. The beautiful, green Mediterranean surroundings offer numerous walking and cycle paths. Picturesque beaches and a clean, azure sea guarantee enjoyable bathing. Luxurious villas and simply appointed bungalows and apartments available.

- **San Marino \*\*\*/\*\***, hotel complex with 5 hotels, 538 rooms, 1457 beds, the Rajska plaža beach, a sports and leisure centre, and 9 tennis courts. Situated on the island's most famous beach, the Rajska plaža. Suitable for families and small children. In the surrounding areas there are a number of smaller beaches, some of which are naturist beaches.

## **Camping – 5000 guests**

Rab has two very attractive campsites for those guests who love to be in close contact with nature on their summer holiday.

- Padova III \*\*\*, 1 500 guests

- San Marino\*\*\*, 3 500 guests

## **Rooms and apartments in private houses - 19,000 beds**

- Towns: Rab, Banjol, Barbat, Palit, Kapor, Mundanije, Supetarska Draga, 15 100 beds

- Town: Lopar, 3900 beds

## **Yacht marinas**

- Rab, 142 berths

- Supetarska Draga, 280 berths

## **CUISINE**

Many a tourist town would be glad to be located in a place of such abundance as Rab. The fertile soil of Rab, with its fruits, and the surrounding sea, rich in a variety of fish and first-class shrimp – these form the basis of Rab's healthy Mediterranean cuisine. Food here is so rich and so closely tied to the environment that it is even part of the range of souvenirs available on the island: the freshest fish and seafood, the Rab Cake – a unique-tasting cake produced on the island for more than 800 years now – and organically-grown olives, figs, grapes and honey. These are the delicacies on the menu of the many restaurants and taverns, prepared in the traditional way by supreme masters of the kitchen.

To discover the cuisine and become intimate with its details is a worthy undertaking, whose reward is enjoyment par excellence.

## **ENVIRONMENT**

Rab is an island of the scents and colours of nature, of aromatic, flavouring and healing herbs, high-quality wines, prošek and rakija, honey and honey products and lavenders. Rab is an exceptionally sunny island, with no less than 2,480 hours of sun annually, 150 days without a single cloud, and only 15 completely cloudy days. A climate like this can only be good for promoting a back-to-basics approach to organic production.

## **SPORTS AND LEISURE**

The diversity and scattered nature of the island archipelago provides amateur sportsmen and women with a place to enjoy leisure, wellness facilities and a healthy way of life: 157km of cycle paths, 144km of walking trails, 5 diving centres, twenty tennis courts, five all-purpose courts, a sports hall, paintball field, sea kayaking, hunting and fishing and marine sports. In addition to these leisure facilities, there is a flotilla of large and small, fast and slow boats available for charter. These can get you to some secret inlet in no time at all, and your enjoyment of an active holiday can really begin.

## **DIVING**

There are four diving centres on Rab. Visitors can take diving courses, as well as go on diving excursions under expert supervision and equipment can also be rented. The waters of Rab have much to offer divers and around the island of Rab there are additional small satellite islands: Sv. Grgur (St. Gregory's), Goli, Prvić, Dolin, Ćutin.

Besides the interesting submarine caves and tunnels, schools of fish, shells, algae and corals, as well as small wrecks, the underwater world also hides a special treasure, a protected amphora field off Sorinj.

Other interesting diving locations are: Kostača, Grgur island, the Macinj cliff, the Medova Buža cave, a wrecked freight ship – the bay of Zavrtnica, Lun – the island of Pag, Punta and Kalifront.

## **Tourism statistics**

- 1,700,000 nights spent annually

- 220,000 tourists annually

From (approximate figures):

1. Germany - 40%
2. Italy - 11%
3. Austria - 12%
4. Croatia - 11%
5. Slovenia - 10%
6. Hungary - 8%
7. Czech Republic - 5%
8. Other - 3%

## **INFORMATION AND RESERVATION**

### **Rab Town Tourist Board, Trg Municipium Arba 8, HR-51280, Rab**

Tel: 00 385 51 724 064,

Fax: 00 385 51 725 057

Web: [www.tzg-rab.hr](http://www.tzg-rab.hr)

E-mail: [tzg-raba@ri.t-com.hr](mailto:tzg-raba@ri.t-com.hr)

### **Lopar Tourist Board, HR-51281 Lopar**

Tel: 00 385 51 775 508; fax: 00 385 51 775 487

E-mail: [lopar@lopar.com](mailto:lopar@lopar.com)

Web: [www.lopar.com](http://www.lopar.com)

### **Hotels & Campsites - Imperial d.d. Rab, Jurja Barakovića 2, HR-51280, Rab**

Tel. 00 385 51 66 77 90 fax: 00 385 51 724 117

E-mail: [sale@imperial.hr](mailto:sale@imperial.hr) , E-mail: [marketing@imperial.hr](mailto:marketing@imperial.hr)

Web: [www.imperial.hr](http://www.imperial.hr) - [www.rab-camping.com](http://www.rab-camping.com)

### **Hotel Arbiana**

Tel.+385 51 775 900

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E-mail [sales@arbianahotel.com](mailto:sales@arbianahotel.com)

Web:[www.arbianahotel.com](http://www.arbianahotel.com)

### **Hotel Istra**

Tel.+ 385 51 724 134

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### **Hotel International**

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### **Hotel Epario**

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Web:[www.epario.net](http://www.epario.net)

## **AIRPORT TRANSFER**

During the tourist season, the Imperial hotel company offers the service of the airport transfers that are available to the all passengers travelling to Rab.

Inquiries about the prices, the transport and accommodation booking at the Marketing and Sales department of Imperial d.d.

Tel: 00385 (0)51 66 77 90 and 00385 (0)99 2198042

Fax: 00385 (0)51 724 117

E-mail: [sale@imperial.hr](mailto:sale@imperial.hr)

## Saint's days and holidays

### Easter - program

Rab brass concert

Classical concert - Katedrala Uznesenja Blažene Djevice Marije (Cathedral of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary)

Rab Band Nights - Katedrala Uznesenja Blažene Djevice Marije (Cathedral of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary)

Show by folk ensemble

### "Nautic Passion – 7 Small Rab Boats (7 rabskih kaića)" – 29.04. and 30.04.

Boat show of Rab's small shipbuilding.

### "Križevo" (Procession of the Cross) - last week in April

A church procession including all the churches on the island of Rab. Carrying crosses and singing sacred songs, the procession moves towards the Old Town and finishes with Holy Mass in the Cathedral of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

### Rab National Day - 9th May

Special program on Trg Sv. Kristofora (St. Christopher's Square)

Exhibition

Rab brass concert

Show by folk ensemble

Rab Medieval Games - a special parade, with archery competition by the knights of Rab

### Rab Musical Evenings - the summer months (July, August)

Thursdays - classical music concerts in the Crkva sv. Križa (Church of the Holy Cross)

### The Rapska fjera - summer medieval festival

- 25th, 26th, 27th June - sv. Ana, sv. Jakov, sv. Kristofor (St. Ana's, St. James' and St. Christopher's)

25<sup>th</sup> July - Special program on the main square, Trg sv. Kristofora (St. Christopher's Square)

25th, 26th, 27th July - Exhibition of medieval handicrafts and craftsman's tools by the Rab handicrafts group

27<sup>th</sup> July - traditional medieval games - special parade and archery competition by the knights of Rab.

### Rab Summer Festival

12.08.and.13.08.2011

### Vela Gospa (The Assumption of Our Lady) - 15th August

Special program on the main square, Trg sv. Kristofora (St. Christopher's Square)

Traditional medieval games - special parade and archery competition.

## **Mala Gospa (The Nativity of Our Lady) - 8th September**

Great traditional celebration in the tourist village of Lopar  
Occasional shows by folklore ensembles, exhibitions, concerts etc.

## **HISTORY - Rab is an island with a rich past**

### **Name of the island and town**

The name Rab came about from the Illyrian and Liburnian name Arba. On the Croatian coast, islands and major settlements were often given the same names. Where the town of Rab stands today there was a settlement called Arba in pre-Roman times. The origins of this name are Illyrian and Liburnian and probably mean "darkness", since in ancient times the island was thickly covered with forest. The name Arba is first-mentioned on a stone tablet dating from the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC, on which it also says that Caesar Augustus had the town walls and tower built.

### **The happy town of Rab –“ FELIX ARBA”**

Rab is one of a small number of Croatian towns with a history dating back to pre-Roman times. There were only a small number of settlements which were able to survive from pre-Roman times, not just in terms of physical survival, but as dominant urban centres. There are only ten or so such towns, one of which is Rab, a unique example of a society in its natural surroundings.

On the small peninsula between the Bay of St. Euphemia (Uvala sv. Eufemije) and the town harbour is this beautiful little town with its familiar four bell towers.

In the period from the 9th to the 1st century BC, Rab was settled by the Liburnians. In the 2nd century BC, the Liburnians submitted to Rome and this was the beginning of Romanisation. Over a period of 2000 years, from Rome and Byzantium, to Venetian, then Hungarian and Croatian rule, the island of Rab frequently changed rulers, but Rab was always spared major destruction.

Caesar Augustus Octavius (1<sup>st</sup> century BC) had walls and towers raised for the defence of the town. Thus Rab became a Roman municipium. In the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> century, Rome presented the town of Rab with an amphora. On it was inscribed "Felix Arba". Felix means lucky, wealthy. This title was bestowed by Rome only when a town needed to be singled out because of its merits, influence or significance. Felix Arba (Happy Rab) was a common name for towns in that day, but it is also a true reflection of its wealth. During this happy time, various buildings, sanctuaries and monuments were raised. One emancipated slave managed, with his own means, to build a water conduit which led to the town, along with a public fountain. What contributed to the great wealth of the town, it is hard to determine today. But it is certain that cattle-raising and traditional Mediterranean arable farming, along with well-developed trade, contributed to the rapid development of the economy.

### **Markus Antonius de Dominis**

He was born in the Dominis Nimira palace in 1560. He was educated in Padova, and became a church writer and physicist. Later he studied natural sciences and is renowned for several significant studies. During his lifetime he served as the Bishop of Senj and the Archbishop of Split, thus being the most famous personality of the history of Rab. Because of his conflict with Pope stemming from his criticism and support of church reform, Dominis died in 1624 in exile in Great Britain.

## **LEGENDS - Rab, where legends live**

### **The legend of St. Christopher, patron saint of Rab, whose relics the people of Rab guard even today.**

For centuries now, the relics of St. Christopher have been guarded in the Cathedral in Rab. The 9th May 1075 is celebrated as Dies Victoriae, the day of victory for the town of Rab. On that day he saved the town by directing the Norman arrows away from the city walls and back on the Normans themselves. The 21st July 1364, according to the written sources of the chroniclers of Rab, is celebrated in honour of king Ljudevit the Great, who liberated Rab from the Venetians. This day is also dedicated to St. Christopher. The town high council, by special decree, also proclaimed the 27<sup>th</sup> July a special day - Dies Natalis. Dies Natalis is the day commemorating the martyrdom of St. Christopher, which the church celebrates as his birthday, that is the day when he went to heaven. These holidays are collectively known as Rapska fjera.

### **The legend of St. Marino, founder of the San Marino republic**

The people of Rab are especially proud of the stonemason called Marinus of Rab, the founder of the small state of San Marino. According to the legend, he came to Arminum (today's Rimini) in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century. As a Christian fleeing persecution during the time of Emperor Diocletian, he settled on Monte Titano. Later he was joined by other future citizens of the city-state he was to build. The stonemason from Lopar was pronounced a saint.

### **The island of Rab and the Republic of San Marino**

San Marino and Rab signed a twinning agreement in 1968 and the tourist village of Lopar carries the name San Marino after its twin town and the stonemason Marino. Thanks to the legend, there are friendly relations between the city of San Marino and Rab. This connection is reinforced with traditional visits between the two. Rab has featured an archery competition between the people of San Marino and Rab since 1995.

### **The legend of an unhappy love - Draga the Shepherdess**

In ancient times, the young Kalifront kept the sheep of his father who was a friend of Barbat, lord of the eastern part of the island. The Barbat of today is named after him.

According to the legend, Barbat had a daughter, Draga. As she grew into a young woman, fate decided that she too would look after her father's sheep. Kalifront fell passionately in love with the girl and finally gave in to his madness. The girl warned him and said that she must not be with him, as her mother had pledged her to purity before the goddess Diana. Draga had to flee, and Kalifront went after her. He caught up with her outside the Loparska Jamina cave. The girl screamed and prayed to Diana for help.

Diana heard her prayer for help and turned her into a stone statue. The gods punished Kalifront by sentencing him to feed on forest fruits and to plant trees as long as the spring in the cave did not dry up. As the forest became thicker, so the hairs on Kalifront's skin became thicker, until he looked more like an animal than a man. In the end he became like the trees himself and merged into the forest.

Thus today the largest forest on Rab, as well as the peninsula, got the name Kalifront.

## **RABSKA FJERA and the medieval games**

Rab medieval games

Recently, the tradition of the crossbowmen of Rab was revived (first held in 1364), featuring costumes from the Middle Ages. The games are held several times a year on Trg Sv. Kristofora (St. Christopher's Square) - 9<sup>th</sup> May, 25<sup>th</sup> June (Croatia's National Day), 27<sup>th</sup> June (St. Christopher's Day - day of the patron

saint of Rab - a public celebration, with a tournament by the crossbowmen of Rab) and 15<sup>th</sup> August (Assumption of Our Lady, holiday - public celebration with a tournament by the crossbowmen of Rab).

## Rabska fjera

In honour of King Ljudevit the Great, who liberated Rab from Venetian dominance, as well as in remembrance and honour of St. Christopher, on the 21<sup>st</sup> July 1364, the High Town Council of Rab pronounced the following days municipal holidays by special decree:

9<sup>th</sup> May: Dies Victoriae - the day when Rab, thanks to the prayers of St. Christopher, was liberated from the Normans in 1075.

27<sup>th</sup> July: Dies Natalis - day of the martyrdom of St. Christopher. The church celebrates this day as his birthday, that is the day when St. Christopher went to heaven.

### Fori et chori

The celebrations always began in the cathedral, with the obligatory attendance of the prince, judges and the town council, who carried candles. In the formal procession, the head of St. Christopher is carried in a silver relic box through the town. Medieval games are played, and the winner receives a prize. During these holidays, the town court was closed. Debtors from the village could enter and leave the town freely for two whole weeks, since the court did not conduct its official business. The public merriment lasted several days, and the gates to the town were open to all.

From the writings of the chroniclers of Rab

In more recent times, the holidays have been shortened to 3 days:

25<sup>th</sup> July - St. James' Day

26<sup>th</sup> July - St. Anna's Day and

27<sup>th</sup> July - St. Christopher's Day.

Today's Rapska fjera celebrations hark back to the Rab of yesteryear, which celebrated its liberty and the independence of its municipium.

The city becomes a great stage, a huge public celebration by the people of Rab and their friends from San Marino. In their colourful historical costumes, the people of Rab demonstrate their traditional art and craftwork to their guests. The Rapska fjera end in a medieval tournament.

"Window to the past"

"...the fjera is a celebration which was returned to life six and a half centuries ago. It is not a parade of brilliance, but an expression of the desire to delve back, in spirit at least, into past centuries, in which we recognise our ancestors and our roots and in so doing affirm our own identity. In a sea of highly developed, modern technology, we want to spare a look for the beauty of handicraft and of a fast-moving hand, with calluses instead of gloves, of a connection to nature, the earth and the sea, of the spiritual and material creativity of our ancestors, their individual, rich creativity which today, in this modern time of machines,

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Slobodan Novak - poet, Academy member, a writer who is closely tied to his homeland and to Rab, one of the great classic writers of Croatian literature.

## CULTURAL HERITAGE

### SACRED BUILDINGS

#### 1. Samostan svetog Antuna Opata (St. Anthony the Abbot's Monastery) - Franciscan monastery

A monastery in the old centre of town (Kladanac). There, the oldest work of art can be found - an oil on canvas of the town of Rab from 1638. The monastery was founded in the 11<sup>th</sup> century exclusively for the aristocracy. Today, nuns live a quiet life in the convent, with its view over the turquoise blue sea. The nuns in the convent live actively, tending the garden and making handicrafts, greetings cards, lace tablecloths from agave thread and painting glass - one of them even paints icons.

#### 2. Katedrala Uznesenja Blažene Djevice Marije (Cathedral of the Assumption of Mary)

A church, as a Christian place of worship, was probably built there as far back as the 4<sup>th</sup> century. At the spot where the Church of St. Mary stood, a triple-naved basilica was built in the 12<sup>th</sup> century in Romantic style and consecrated by Pope Alexander III in 1177. The church was renovated in the 15<sup>th</sup> century. Above the main altar there is a ciborium, comprising several architectural styles, for which reason the church has special significance. The front part of the altar mensus is decorated with marble - the decoration represents St. Christopher walking through water with a child on his shoulders. The quire for the clergy is also of great value and is made of walnut wood. Besides several valuable pictures in the church, there is also the vestry, containing various relics. One particularly valuable relic is the skull of St. Christopher. It is thought that the crown on the skull is a token of gratitude from the people of Rab for the miracles of St. Christopher, which protected the island and its population, and for which his persecutors guillotined him. The façade comprises two-coloured local stone from Rab.

#### 3. The cathedral bell-tower

Around 50m to the west of the façade of the cathedral is the bell tower, the most beautiful structure of its kind on the Croatian coast. The bell tower was built in the Romanic style and is first mentioned in the 13<sup>th</sup> century. It is 26m tall. The original four-sided dome was destroyed by lightning. After this it was reconstructed and a six-sided pyramid built. At the foundations of the bell-tower, four-sided stone blocks can be seen, old Roman monuments which were used as building material.

#### 4. Samostan svetog Andrije (St. Andrew's Monastery) – Benedictine monastery

The monastery was already in existence at the beginning of the 11<sup>th</sup> century. The triple-naved church that was part of the monastery was renovated in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and then additionally decorated in the baroque period, hence there are beautiful Romanic elements hiding beneath the baroque decorations. Women today live in the monastery. The high walls of the monastery run along the eastern side of Uvala sv. Eufemije (St. Euphemias' Bay). The silence which surrounds the monastery and its residents, who are reclusive, provides the necessary peace, in Benedictine style. The bell tower is the oldest on Rab. Along with the four bell towers of Rab, it gives the south-eastern panorama of the town a special appearance.

#### 5. Crkva svete Justine (Church of St. Justina)

The church and Benedictine monastery were built between 1573 and 1578 and the monastery was closed in 1808. Both buildings were built by the people of Rab. Above the southern altar a picture the death of St. Joseph hangs, belonging to Titian's school. For years now, Holy Mass has not been performed in the church. The church houses a museum with a collection of sacred items.

## **6. Crkva svetog Križa (Church of the Holy Cross)**

The church was built in the 13<sup>th</sup> century. Later it was renovated and it is now famous for the Rab Musical Evenings held there in summer.

## **7. Bell-tower and remains of Crkva sv. Ivana Evanđeliste (Church of St. John the Evangelist)**

The monastery and church of St. John the Evangelist is of exceptional importance to the island of Rab, since it is the only medieval sacred building with a deambulatory around the altar. St. John's Basilica (Bazilika sv. Ivana) was probably built in the pre-Christian era, and was generously renovated in the Romanic era (11<sup>th</sup> century), gaining its 20 metre-high bell-tower. A Benedictine monastery was built by the basilica and was handed over to the Franciscans in the 13th century. The basilica fell into complete ruin in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Recent study and restoration of some parts of the basilica saw reconstruction of the area around the altar including the deambulatory, which consists of a colonnade comprising six columns with a system of arches and vaults. The column capitals are of special value.

## **8. Crkva svetog Kristofora (Church of St. Christopher) - Lapidary**

This is a reconstructed chapel to the patron saint of the town and island of Rab, St. Christopher. Today the church has been converted to a lapidary and museum.

## **9. Crkva sv. Franje na groblju (Church of St. Francis at the graveyard)**

This is the only preserved building of the Franciscan Friars of the Third Order. According to the inscription on the façade it was built in 1490, in a transitional style between Gothic and Renaissance.

## **City walls, palaces and other buildings in the town**

### **1. City walls - Kula smjelih (Tower of the Bold) - Kula sv. Kristofora (St. Christopher's Tower)**

Construction of the walls began in the 12<sup>th</sup> or 13<sup>th</sup> century as protection against enemies. It conceals the remains of the medieval walls which were there previously and were probably demolished in the building of the current ones. The Tower of the Bold and St. Christopher's Tower were built in the 15th century in order to strengthen the fortress.

### **2. Knežev dvor (Prince's Court)**

Construction of the Prince's Court began in the 13<sup>th</sup> century; however the most significant parts of this complex of palaces were built in the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries. The palace is dominated by a tower in the Gothic and Renaissance style.

The offices of the Rab town administration are situated in the Prince's Court, as well as the Council Chamber.

The front is graced by a balcony on lion head-shaped consoles and a harmonious balustrade in the Renaissance style.

### **3. Gradska loža (City Lodge)**

The City Lodge was built in the Renaissance style in 1509 as an open, roofed hall with a series of columns. The Lodge was the centre of events up until the fall of the Venetian Republic in 1797.

### **4. City Clock**

At the same time as the building of the Lodge the tower was built, with its clock which is still working today.

### **5. Palača Dominis Nimira (The Dominis Nimira Palace)**

This palace, dating from the 15<sup>th</sup> century, is one of the most beautiful Renaissance buildings on Rab. It is graced by Renaissance windows and a portal with the coat-of-arms of the Dominis family. In this palace, the Dominis family taught the public to read and write.

### **6. Palača Bakota (The Bakota Palace)**

Today, a garden wall still surrounds the Bakota Palace, with a portal in the Venetian Gothic style.

### **7. Palača Tudorini (The Tudorini Palace)**

The palace of the Tudorini family.

### **8. The Komrčar town park and Pravdoje Belija (1853 - 1925)**

Pravdoje Belija came to the island in 1883 as Chief Forester, planting trees and creating new forests. He turned the former town meadow into a beautiful park which bears the name Komrčar. It got its name from the Franciscans as far back as the 13th century. Because of his exceptional efforts and his knowledge of and love for the forest, the people of Rab raised a monument to him in 1974 in the Komrčar park, as an expression of gratitude.

## **Sacred buildings on the island**

### **1. Crkva svetog Petra (Church of St. Peter) in**

The church was built in 1059 and is The monastery was established by the Bishop of Rab, Drago, who in 1071 got permission to found the monastery by Petar Krešimir IV. The church was built as a triple-naved basilica and has recently been restored. It is widely thought to be one of the best-preserved Romanic buildings on the east coast of the Adriatic. The church still comprises a Gothic bell-tower which is considered one of the oldest on the Croatian Adriatic coast. The bell was made in 1299 by Luka, a member of the Order from Venice.

### **2. Crkva svetog Damjana (Church of St. Damien) in Barbat**

A path up the hill leads to the ruins of the church on Brdo sv. Damjana (St. Damien's Hill), 223m above Barbat. Recent research has confirmed the theory that there was once a building there with three functions: that of a church sanctuary, a vanguard and watchtower, which was also a refuge from enemy attack. A floor plan of the fortress opens up the possibility that this was the location of the largest Justinian fortress.

### **3. Samostan svete Eufemije (Monastery of St. Euphemia) - friars of the Franciscan order**

The decree for the building of the monastery is an exceptionally valuable document, as it contains the first reference to the Croatian name of the town and island of Rab.

The monastery is situated on the north side of St. Euphemias' Bay and was founded in 1444. The church attached to the monastery is decorated with beautiful altars and picture of saints of great artistic value. Of special significance is the polyptych by brothers Antonio and Bartolomeo Vivarini from the island of Murano in the Venice lagoon. Also of interest is the wooden ceiling of the monastery, a tabulatum decorated with sacred motifs. Part of the monastery has been turned into the Rab Town Ethnographic Museum with a gallery of pictures by Friar Janez Ambroz Testen. There are around 7000 rare books kept in the monastery library - illustrated Mass books and collections of choral songs as well as a collection of 34 incunabula (pre-15<sup>th</sup> century books), the Rab Law Book from 1598 and many other examples. The Rapska kronika (the Chronicles of Rab) is also kept here, copied, summarized and guarded by Friar Odoriko Badurina. This is a chronicle of the Monastery of St. Euphemias, with detailed historical accounts of the island and accompanying documents.

## **TRADITION**

### **The Tanac folk dance - a dance for joyful occasions**

Earlier, the tanac was danced on Rab on occasions of great celebration, weddings or the fašnik (Shrove Tuesday). National costume, with the exception of women's dress, is no longer worn on the island. The folk dance has survived until the present day in wedding customs. At great village weddings, the guests would be dressed in traditional attire. They would gather on the day of the wedding in the house of the bride and of the groom. The guests were ushered in the right direction by the host, and the wedding procession was entertained by two bagpipers. In this fashion the wedding procession would move from the groom's to the bride's home. In the home of the bride, an amusing performance would take place. The singers would sing, and the groom's best man would ask for the hand of the bride. At that moment the wedding host would appear who, along with the members of the groom's wedding procession, would ask for the bride. This scene would be observed by the parents of the bride who would pretend to be disinterested and with the help of the other guests would continue their everyday chores as though the members of the procession were not there. Once the bride was found, after this fun performance, the wedding procession would break into happy song. They would go to the church or the registry office where the wedding was to take place. The standard-bearer, his flag held high, would lead the procession. Couples would dance all the way in the procession.

The musical instrument which accompanied the tanac was the gajda (bagpipes). It was made of a goat- or lambskin bag through which poked instruments similar to the clarinet, with finger-holes and a blowpipe. The Rapski tanac folklore ensemble from Banjol guards the tradition of the tanac today.

### **Klapa**

The klapa is a male-voice choir which cultivates traditional songs and Dalmatian melodies.

They are mostly sad and happy songs about love and the sea, or they describe amusing events. On Rab there are 3 male and 1 female klapa.

### **Natural beauty – hiking on the island of Rab**

RAB is an island of sun, sea and beauty and it is one of the greenest islands of the Croatian Adriatic. Numerous promenades and cycling paths will show you the way to attractive locations on the island and offer you the possibility to enjoy the outstanding natural beauty of the picturesque Mediterranean landscape and an active and recreational holiday.

Rab is the ninth largest island of the Croatian Adriatic.

The island counts 22 km in length from the cape of Sorinj to the cape of Glavina.

The island's width is 11 km.

The total length of cycling paths on the island of Rab is 80 km. The total length of walking paths on the island of Rab is 100 km.

### **Kamenjak hiking trail**

Kamenjak, with its peak at 408 m, is the highest and largest mountain massif, of limestone composition, that protects the island from cold northern influences.

From here you can enjoy a spectacular view of the Velebit mountain massif and of the nearby archipelago, the islands of Cres, Lošinj, Silba, Olib, Krk and Pag. On a clear day, when the visibility is extremely good, you can see the mountain of Učka, which is the highest peak of Kvarner, Sis, which is the highest mountain peak of the island of Cres and towards the south the islands of Ugljan and Molatac, which are almost 40 miles away.

The best and most encompassing panoramic view of the island of Rab can be enjoyed from the top of the mountain of Kamenjak. The settlements of Barbat and Banjol are located at the foot of Kamenjak, along the coastline and the Channel of Barbat, towards the south. In the southwest of the island a woodland area covers the carst peninsula of Kalifront. The flysch valleys of Supetar-Mundanije and Kampor, separated by a flysch reef, are situated in the centre of the island. A flysch area - the Lopar peninsula - is

located in the northwest of the island and is characterised by numerous shallow sand beaches. We should also mention the Bays of Supetar and Kampor for their extraordinary beauty.

### **Kalifront peninsula**

It is situated on the north-western side of the island. The peninsula of Kalifront is characterised by its karst relief and the well-indented coast with numerous beautiful sea bays. It is the greenest part of the island of Rab, covered with extraordinary Holm oak forest and it is also the largest woodland area.

The length is 9 km from the cape of Kalifront to the cape of Frkanj.

The width is 3 km from the cape of Planka to the bay of Kampor.

The peninsula is between 50 and 70 m above sea-level and the highest point is the area of Plogar 94 m.

The coast is mainly low and rocky. The forests of the Kalifront peninsula are ideal for relaxing hiking. The hilly areas and paths are not demanding, so older visitors can enjoy hiking too.

### **Forest Dundo**

The peninsula of Kalifront is famous for its Holm oak, which can be found in the forest of Dundo, one of the rare forests on the Mediterranean that is so well preserved. It is also the most important forest on the island of Rab.

Holm oak (*Quercus ilex*) is an evergreen oak which can reach a thousand years in age. A few impressive examples are preserved in the Dundo forest.

In 1949 the Dundo forest was declared a natural rarity and it was placed under the protection of the Department for Natural Heritage Protection in the category of Special Reserve Forest – Botanical Reserve (forest vegetation).

### **The Kalifront open state hunting ground**

An open hunting ground is located on the Kalifront peninsula, managed by the Faculty of Forestry in Zagreb for the purposes of scientific and research work. In the hunting ground you may find:

axis deer (*Axis axis*)

mouflon (*Ovis musimon*).

### **The Premužić path on the Kalifront Peninsula**

The Premužić Path was built around 1930 by Ante Premužić, a university-educated forestry engineer and a famous architect and constructor of forest roads, mountain-tourist paths and expert in stream management.

The Premuziceva-1 geological trail takes you from the Lopar camping place to the Matkici settlement, near the St. Peter's church in Supetarska Draga. The trail crosses the main Rab Island ridge and the hidden Fruga valley. Its length is 8 km, and there are no resting places nor drinking water, so it is recommended to bring along the water. The trail is partly exposed to the sun, and partly takes you through the woods. The Lopar part of the trail is exposed to the bora wind. The trail is not recommended for cyclists.

The Premuziceva 2 geological trail takes you from Kampor, through the protected Dundo forest to the Kalifront southern coast, then along the coast to Frkanj, and eventually to the St. Eufemija Bay. The trail is 15 km long, and it goes primarily through the woods. The resting places are located in Gozinka cove, at Suha Punta, and during the tourist season also on Frkanj. The coastal part of the trail is exposed to the sirocco wind. The trail is not recommended to cyclists.

The Rab-Maman trail takes you from the Rab city walls, along the St. Eufemija cove, by the white road to the Gonar settlement, then to the Dumići cove, around the Dumići peninsula, along the coast to the seaway which should be crossed to get to the Maman islet. The trail is ca 14 km long, depending on the

chosen trail, and largely goes by wide trail and coastal walkways which are also suitable for cyclists. The DumlCi and Maman parts of the trail are accessible only by foot (or a boat). The resting places are located in the St. Eufemija cove, In Kampor, Gonar and Dumići. The Dumići and Maman part of the trail is exposed to the bora wind. Access/return to/from the trail is possible by busses to/from Kampor and Dumići.

#### **Other paths on the island of Rab**

Frkanj – Suha Punta  
Rab – St. Damien's – Grpe – Rab  
Rab – Sv. Ilija (St. Elijah's) – Gonar  
Supetarska Draga – Kampor – Gonar – Dumići  
around Lopar  
Lopar – Fruga – Mundanije – Rab  
Lopar – Ciganka – San Marino

#### **Pine woods on the island of Rab**

aleppo pine (*Pinus halepensis*)  
maritime pine (*Pinus pinaster*)  
European black pine (*Pinus nigra*)  
Italian stone pine (*Pinus pinea*)  
cypress (*Cupressus sempervirens*)

The town park of Komrčar is a pine wood of particular importance which was planted by the head forester of Rab, Pravdoje Belija, and which represents one of the most beautiful parks on the Croatian Adriatic.

#### **Endemic vegetation from Kvarner**

Croatian birthwort (*Aristolochia croatica*)  
Croatian daisy (*Leucanthemum croaticum*)  
Dalmatian knapweed (*Centaurea dalmatica*)  
Istrian bellflower (*Campanula istriaca*)  
Kvarner fern (*Phyllitis hibrida*)

Places where the Holm forest was destroyed due to various influences are covered with macchia which is characteristic for its diverse shrubbery. Most of the area of the Lopar peninsula is characterized by scrub and there are also numerous dry meadows and rocky pasture grounds.

#### **Animal life on the island of Rab**

- hare (*Lepus europaeus*) the biggest autochthonous mammal  
European rabbit (*Oryctolagus cuniculus*)  
beech marten (*Martes foina*) is the most numerous carnivorous beast  
fallow deer (*Dama dama*) inhabit Goli otok  
There are also rats, field mice, domestic house mice and bats along with the least weasel (*Mustela nivalis*) and hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*).  
There are also numerous bird species – 162 of them grouped in 44 families.

Source: "Biseri Jadrana", a publication from the Rab Tourist Board archives.  
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