

Croatia National Day Special

Solid ties deepened by visits, interests

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On June 25 Croatia celebrates its Statehood Day. This year we celebrate 28 years since Croatia regained its independence. Croatians have long struggled for freedom and the rein-

statement of a Croatian state.

The history of Croatian royalty lasted from the seventh to 12th centuries, followed by hundreds of years under Hungarian, Austrian and Venetian rule. After being part of two Yugoslavian states between 1918 and 1991, Croatia finally regained independence and defended its freedom through the victorious Homeland War. Croatia joined the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in 2009 and the European Union in 2013.

Today Croatia is a country with strong democratic institutions, a market econ-

omy and vibrant society. Croatia's gross domestic product grew 3.9 percent in first quarter of 2019 — the highest growth among all EU member states. Croatia will hold the rotational presidency of the European Council in the first half of next year and its biggest port city, Rijeka, will be the European Capital of Culture in 2020.

Croatia is a Mediterranean and Central European country known for its beauty and diverse, unique and unspoiled nature. It has a rich cultural and historic heritage with a number of UNESCO World Heritage Sites. Located at the crossroads of various cultures and influences, Croatia boasts a rich and varied gastronomy and a long history of wine and spirits production.

Being friendly and open toward other cultures is in our genes. This has long been noticed and Croatia recently celebrated 170 years of organized tourism. Last year we hosted almost 17 million foreign tourists — more than four times our population.

Croatia and Japan have developed a strong friendship based on shared values.

In the year Japan entered a new imperial era — Reiwa — we already had two very important bilateral visits. Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Marija Pejcinovic Buric visited Japan in March and the Speaker of the Croatian Parliament Gordan Jandrokovic visited Japan at the beginning of June. Jandrokovic and his spouse were the second foreign dignitary couple received by their majesties the emperor and empress. Both visits have confirmed strong ties between our two countries with enormous potential for further development, particularly economic.

Since the economic partnership agreement between the EU and Japan entered into force early this year, our countries have a new framework and opportunity for strengthening and deepening economic ties.

Croatia offers various investment and trade opportunities with both competitive operational costs and return on investments, attractive incentives and easy access to all of Europe via various modes of transport. Our Adriatic ports are



Dubrovnik is a seaport city known as “the pearl of the Adriatic.” It prospered from maritime trade in the 15th and 16th centuries. BORIS KACAN

located deep within the European continent, our highways are among the best in the world in addition to seven international airports.

Croatia has been marketed in Japan as a country of beauty, a tourist hot spot and sports powerhouse. Our sporting efforts go beyond that of last year's soccer World Cup in Russia. We would also like to be marketed as a country of business opportunities so there is a lot of hard work ahead of us.

This content was compiled in collaboration with the embassy. The views expressed here do not necessarily reflect those of the newspaper.

Congratulations
on the Occasion
of the Statehood Day
of the Republic
of
Croatia



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