

CROATIA



Euro 2024 Qualifier
Croatia v Cymru
Stadion Poljud, Split
Saturday March 25th 2023
Kick off 19:45

Welcome to issue 63 of our FSA Cymru Welsh fan Embassy information booklets. We are just about recovered from the World cup in Qatar but are ready for a new campaign and a fresh start, with the journey to Germany starting in Split, Croatia. 2023 will see a compressed calendar of 8 European Championship matches between the end of March and mid-November.

Croatia are a very successful international team and reached the Qatar World cup semi final in 2022, eventually winning the 3rd place play off and were runners up in 2018, so formidable opponents, The stars during the last 10 years have included Luka Modrić, Ivan Perišić, Dejan Lovren, and Mateo Kovačić, all very experienced now, be interesting to see how many of them will be involved this campaign.

We have to say a sad goodbye to four of our “golden Generation”, Gareth Bale, Jonny Williams, Joe Allen and Chris Gunter. All four will be remembered for being Welsh legends by the Red Wall, and we wish them all the best for the future. No words can describe their contribution to Welsh football, so we simply say, “thank you”.

FSA Cymru volunteers are available to help for any eventuality and we operate a 24-hour hot line throughout the few days our fans are expected to be in Split, If you would prefer to speak to a female volunteer we can facilitate this, we also have excellent contacts with the Welsh and local police agencies, the FAW, and the FCDO area consulate.

It is important that you have comprehensive travel and medical insurance.

Top Tip

Keep a copy of your passport and a list of important phone numbers in a place that can be easily accessed if needed. A good idea would be to scan your passport and email it to yourself.

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DIOLCH

FSA CYMRU MISSION STATEMENT

To help and support Welsh fans who travel away. Our role is to provide accurate and objective information, including a Risk Assessment: we convey what other agencies, such as police forces, government departments, and football authorities are recommending: we publish a comprehensive guide which is distributed free of charge to all travelling supporters: we operate and publicise a 24 hour Hotline for fans in difficulties: we arrange a Football fan embassy operation, at venues abroad, where we can offer advice, guidance and support as necessary.

We do not tolerate discrimination of any individuals on any grounds including the following: ethnic origin, ability, religion and belief, gender, sexual orientation and age We reject violence, both verbal and physical We stand up for the empowerment of grassroots football supporters We want to promote a positive football and supporters' culture,

including values such as fair play and good governance We work with the Football Association of Wales in all aspects affecting the fans, to ensure that the supporters voice is heard. A continuous, running dialogue is held with Mr Mark Evans, Head of International Affairs, and his staff.

We take supporters complaints, views to the FAW for discussion and try to involve Welsh fans to participate in these meetings. One of our main objectives is to take every possible action to eradicate any inter club rivalry when fans are following the Welsh national team.



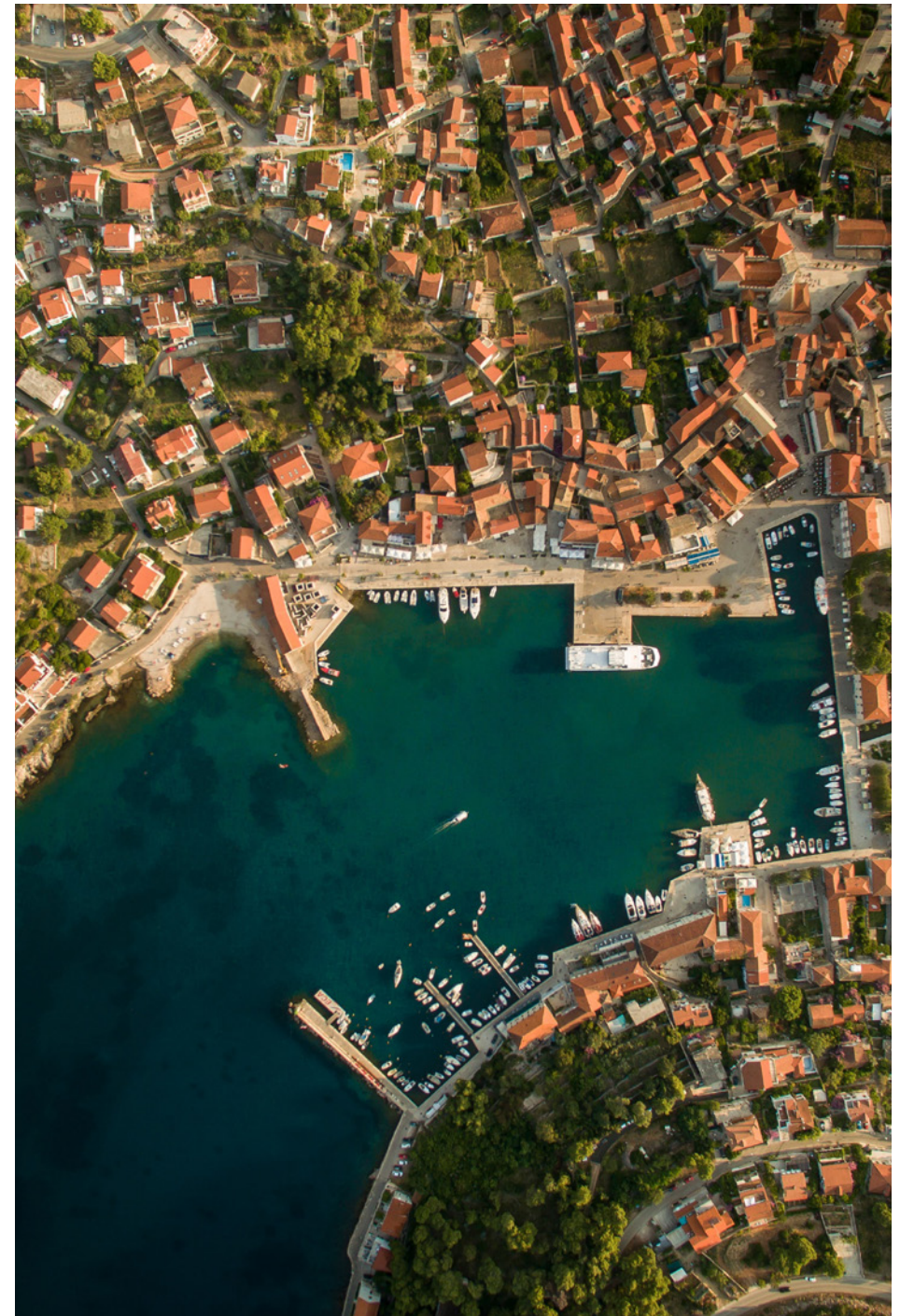
CROATIA

Croatia, or officially the Republic of Croatia, has a population of nearly 3.9 million. It is a country at the crossroads of Central and Southeast Europe. Its coast lies entirely on the Adriatic Sea. It borders Slovenia to the northwest, Hungary to the northeast, Serbia to the east, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro to the southeast, and shares a maritime border with Italy to the west and southwest. Its capital and largest city, Zagreb has a population of 770,000 and lies in the North of the country some 4 hours and 250 miles by road from Split.

Just over 30 years ago Croatia was part of the Socialist Federal republic of Yugoslavia, one of the six republics that made up the federation - Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia (including the regions of Kosovo and Vojvodina) and Slovenia. On 25 June 1991, the declarations of independence of Slovenia

and Croatia effectively ended SFRY's existence. The next month, the Yugoslav army—largely composed of Serbs and controlled by Slobodan Milosevic—invaded Croatia, justifying the act as a means to protect the Serbian minority there. The war in Croatia effectively ended in the autumn of 1995. It is estimated that more than 100,000 people were killed and two million people, more than half the population, were forced to flee their homes as a result of the war that raged from April 1992 through to November 1995.

So a lot of rebuilding and infrastructure was needed and it is still ongoing but it's a remarkable transformation really and Croatia is a thriving tourists destination, greatly improving the economy. On January 1st 2023 they joined the eurozone and the Schengen area, the currency is now the Euro replacing Croatian Kuna.



GETTING TO SPLIT

Flights

Direct flights from the UK are not possible until the holiday season starts, but there are connecting flights, mainly via Rome, Frankfurt and Zagreb.

Split Airport to Central Split

It's about a thirty minute drive to the city centre. Taxis were quite expensive, especially if you are travelling alone, you can order an "Uber" though which is about 10 Euros cheaper than the standard fare of between £40-£45

Buses

There are frequent bus services that depart just outside the main terminal building of Split Airport. One of these services is the Croatia Airlines bus (supposedly timed to coincide with their flights). A one-way ticket costs €5.97, and the journey time is approximately 30-40 minutes. You can pay the driver/conductor on board the bus. There are also other buses running services for the same price/journey time – essentially, head outside the terminal building and look for any queue of travellers

waiting to board a bus!

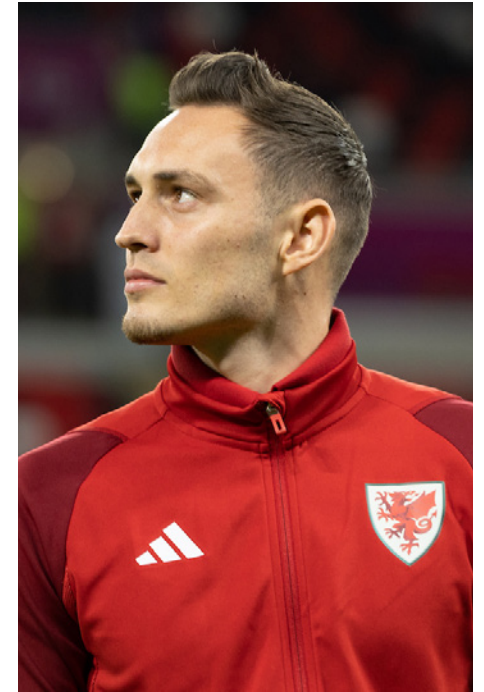
These buses take you directly to the main bus station in Split, which is next to the train station and the port.

Trains from Zagreb

During March, trains travel to Split once a day at 3.15 pm, journey time is 6 hours and 21 minutes, train departs from Zagreb Glavni Kolodvor (main train station) which is located in central Zagreb. The train arrives at the main train station in Split located right next to the ferry port and the main bus station, about 5 minutes from the city centre. The train stops at 16 more railway stations in between. There is also a night train option. Ticket prices vary dependant on class of travel but at time of print a single adult ticket costs on average about £22.

Buses from Zagreb

Regular "Flexi bus" service operates during March approximately £20 single fare and £35 return but it will depend on the time of travel. Journey time is about 5 hours.



Croatia



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SPLIT

Croatia's second-largest city is Split, situated on the Adriatic coast. A popular tourist destination, Split is known for its stunning beaches, as well as museums and architectural remains that date back to the Roman period. The city is the location of Diocletian's Palace, a UNESCO World Heritage site and famous Roman monument. Split has a population of around 180,000, although this increases to almost 350,000 for the wider metropolitan area. We visit in March, just before the tourists season starts so it will not be as busy, but still plenty going on. Not all the Red Wall like to spend their spare time in the bar and for those that like a bit of sight seeing Split is an ideal location. You can spend hours walking along the sea front promenade, more commonly called the "Riva" or winding your way through the old town, what ever you decide, there is plenty to see and do.

You'll need at least a few hours to get a real taste of the old city and there's no

better way to do this than on foot. Head for Pjaca square where Split's old town hall overlooks many cafes and bars. Fruit Square is also essential, taking its name from the market that was held here for centuries. To see how Split's inhabitants go about their day try Marmont Street, which extends down to the water and is flanked at the upper end by shops, cafes and restaurants.

Diocletian's Palace is the most famous cultural and tourist attraction of Split, Although called a palace, it is more like a big fortress surrounded by walls and towers. It was built in the 4th century by Roman Emperor Diocletian who wanted to build a fortress to spend his retirement age. Entrance to the palace is free, because it is part of the city, However, there is an entrance fee to the buildings located inside the palace.



SPLIT

Split is famous for its nightlife, and you will be spoilt for choice, not just at night but throughout the day. Head to the Riva promenade, with its great range of bars and cafes. You are directly in front of the Old Town and that is where you will find plenty of local bars and of course a couple of Irish Bars, O'Hara's, and Harats Irish Pub, be prepared to pay more here but they normally have the football on many of their big screens.

Most pubs close around 1 pm and please note that they allow Smoking in most of them, which is strange, even when food is served, and the smell of tobacco is common in pubs. After 11 pm the night clubs open, so, something for everyone and plenty of choice.

The best restaurant recommendation was a place called "Bakra steak and pizza bar" just inside the old town on a little street called Ul. Majstora Radovana. Its not a big venue but very popular and you may be wise to book

ahead. There are lots of options though and you will find Pizza is very common on most venues, probably due to Split being so close to Italy, by sea, anyway. The "Toro grill bar" and nearby "Downtown Split steak and seafood" restaurants were also recommended by locals.

The "Fabrique" is where the fans party is located on match day, it is the biggest venue in Split and well worth a visit on non matchdays. "Charlie's bar" is another good spot to hang out in the old town with a good mix of local and international crowds, and has a great atmosphere, it is connected to a hostel so expect cheap drinks.

"Central The Club", located just out of the town walls, is the most popular late-night spot in Split. This is a large two-story club that often features live concerts, and international DJs, Coffee bars are considered to be the top places for socializing for both locals and tourists who arrive

in Split. Just as expected, the top cafes in Split are located in the old town, inside the Diocletian's Palace, on Riva, and on beaches.

Café & Restaurant Lvxor is located on Split Peristyle square, which is considered to be the most prominent tourist spot in the town and well worth a visit.

Café's who sold beer seemed slightly cheaper than pubs and a .30 L glass was about 3 Euro where as half a litre of draught beer worked out about 5 Euro, A bottle of Pils .33 L was 3 Euro.



GETTING TO THE STADIUM

From the airport, you can take the Split Airport Bus, this is by far the cheapest option . This will take you to the bus station in the centre of Split, right by the Split Ferry Port and minutes from the entrance to Diocletian's Palace. While you can always take a taxi to the stadium, you can also get a taxi directly from the airport to the stadium however a taxi can be 10 times more expensive than the airport bus. The airport shuttle bus takes around 30 minutes without traffic.

It is important to note that the centre of Split is completely walkable. If you're staying in the centre of town or within the Old Town, you could easily walk to the stadium, but there will be free shuttle buses available from the promenade and further details will be available on the match day at the ticket collection point.

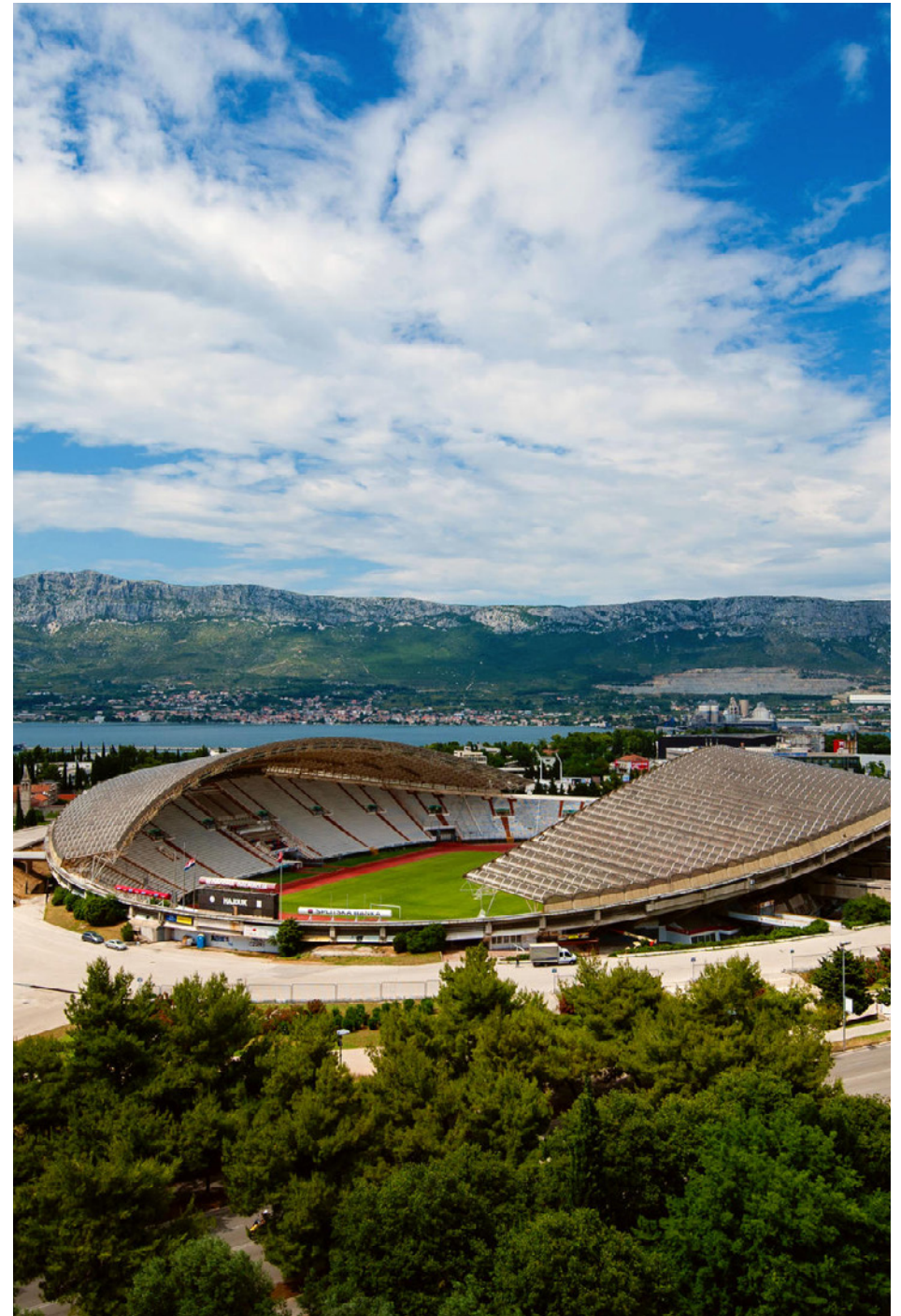
At the end of the game we advise all Welsh fans to use the transfer buses to go back to the promenade rather than walk.

The buses will return ALL fans to the promenade near the Ambassador hotel .

Accessibility

There are no facilities for disabled fans in the away section. There are quite a few steps to negotiate and not much leg room between seats, also another lot of steps lead down to the toilets. However, behind the South goal that is adjacent to the away area, the stadium does have disabled access. It is a safe area, not linked to any other fan areas.

There is a ramp down to the entrance, where a refreshment kiosk should be available (nothing hot) outside. This area is shared with home and away fans.



STADION POLJUD

The Red Wall will gain access to the stadium via a concrete road leading to a ticket check point, Welsh fans will go through a barrier fence line that forms entry channels for specific sectors and here tickets will be scanned and supporters entering the lanes identified and persons with tickets in Zone B only will have a wristband.

Wristbands will be allocated to Welsh fans in section B, only fans with these will gain access to this area. Once tickets have been checked, security will carry out body searches with police monitoring the security operation. There will be both male and female security staff to carry out these checks.

Thereafter, fans will enter the away 'fan zone' where food and beverage and additional toilets are positioned, there is no movement between Zone A & Zone B accommodation areas.

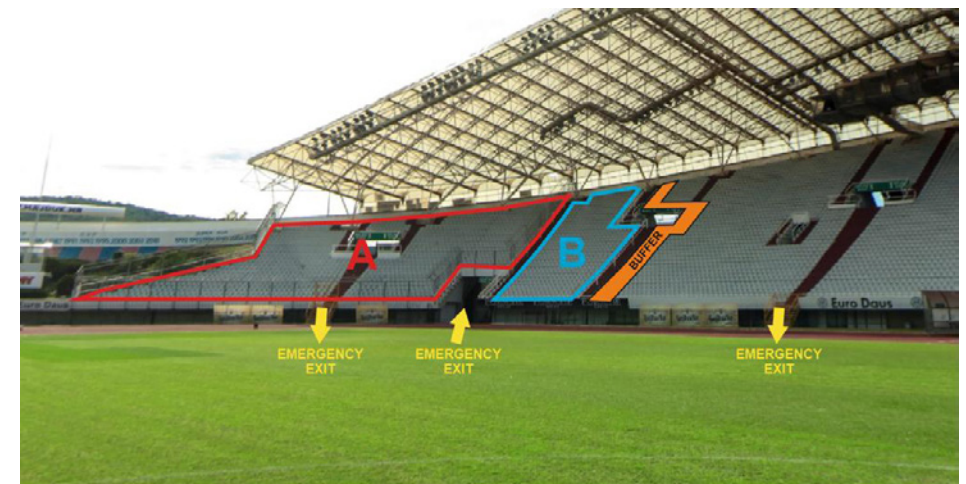
To go to their allocated fans enter through A or B section tripod and an additional security check, However they can freely come back to away fans zone once they have entered stadium. Any fan appearing without a ticket will then be escorted out of the stadium via the exit to the right.

Both Welsh and Croatian fans will enter through gate B, this area is not fenced in, and segregation will be done by stewards.

Toilets are situated at the rear of the visitors' Section. Both males and females must use the steps which are located on either side of the entrance area. There are about a dozen male urinals and 4 cubicles but less facilities are available in the Ladies, there are clear and obvious walkways on opposite sides of the entrance and Men are kindly asked to only use the male facilities. Since our site visit we are advised that additional portable toilet cubicles have been added on the concourse.

The stadium had no permanent refreshment facilities, but on the site visit we were promised that they will have catering outlets near the traveling supporters' entrance in the exterior area. We believe this is now the case.

Welsh fans are allocated section A (Caged area) and section B which has better sight lines. Welsh Disabled fans have a section shared with Home fans to the left of Section A access via ramp.



TORCIDA

The “Torcida” are a Hajduk Split supporters group, recognised as one of the oldest Ultra groups in Europe, they were formed in 1950. They rarely attend international matches, but at club games they create an incredible atmosphere from the North stand and are recognised as one of the most formidable and respected Ultra organisations. All around the city you will see graffiti and murals recognising the Torcida, they really are an important part of the city and its culture.

They are very territorial and passionate about their city and districts where they live and whilst we don't expect any issues during our visit Welsh fans need to be vigilant, especially on matchday, particularly in the “the old town.” an area between the sea front and stadium, They have been confrontational in the past at club games and often come into bars and remove flags, especially close to the ground but this could happen anywhere in the City.

Buses will be provided to ferry Welsh fans from the area close to the Ambassador hotel , this is on the sea front. The buses will take you to the stadium and back again after the match, although pre match we expect many will make their own way, its only about a mile and you can get Uber or local taxi. Coming back to the promenade bars area after the game has been an issue for some visiting fans in the past, especially walking back through the narrow old town streets, so buses are best option really. However, you can make your own way back, it's not a long walk and this is just our advice after speaking with the Croatian FA.

Normally at international games everything is fine and friendly but its important we pass on all the facts to the Red Wall, you can then make your own decisions based on this information.



TICKET COLLECTION

Due to the extremely high expected demand for tickets, a full ticket collection will be in place for this match.

Ticket collections will take place from the Ambassador Hotel, Split (Riva Promenade) on Friday 24th (11am-5pm) and Saturday 25th March (10:30am-4:30pm). There is not suitable collection point at the stadium.

All supporters allocated a ticket will need to collect.

Lead bookers will not be able to collect on behalf of those they have purchased for.

Supporters who fail to collect their tickets, will have the match removed from their booking history, with no refund issued, and will be placed in the lowest priority group for the next Cymru men's away fixture.

There are plenty of bars, restaurants around this area and there will be buses laid on from this vicinity to the stadium on match day, also back here after the game



FAN MATCH

The fans match being organised by Neil Dymock and Gol Cymru will be held in a town called Kastela, 20km outside Split, at the football club called HNK VAL.

The address of the pitch is Cesta dr. Franje Tuđmana 924, Kaštel Stari.

The Mayor of Kastela will be at the game as well as

children who suffer from Down Syndrome (they have designed the poster) with their parents. funds for their organisation.

Neil is looking to organise a bus for the fans team from the Ambassador Hotel in Split, leaving at 1130 am on the 25th, returning at 5.30pm in Split.

A promotional poster for a pre-match party. The background is red. Text includes: 'GOL CYMRU PREMATCH PARTY', 'FABRIQUE, SPLIT 14:00 TO 19:00', 'HAPPY HOUR 14:30 TO 15:30 30% OFF DRINKS', 'PLAYING YOUR FAVOURITE WALES AWAY PLAYLIST', 'WIN A SIGNED WALES SHIRT INC. BALE AND ALLEN SIGNATURES', 'VENUE 5 MIN WALK FROM FAW TICKET COLLECTION'. There are three inset images: a night view of the Fabrique building, a group of people at a table, and a framed red Wales football shirt.



LOST PASSPORTS

Lost passports can cause concern, and will add extra expense to your trip, so please do all you can to keep it safe, we also advise you to keep a digital copy of the photo page on your phone, in case you need to buy an emergency travel document to get you home.

If you lose your passport while you're abroad, or you are unlucky enough to have it stolen, there are a couple of things you should do straight away:

- Cancel your passport: Report your missing passport to the Home Office immediately to reduce the risk of someone using your passport or identity
- Report your missing passport to local police: If you think your passport has been stolen, you should report it to the police as soon as possible. You may need a crime reference number to give to the local British embassy or consulate, as well as to make a claim on your travel insurance

You can apply for an emergency travel document if all the following apply:

- you're a British national
- you're outside the UK
- your passport has been lost, stolen, damaged, is full, has recently expired or is with HM Passport Office or a foreign embassy
- you do not have time to renew or replace your passport before you travel
- you can provide proof of your travel plans, for example booking confirmations (or detailed written travel plans if you cannot book ahead)

You can use an emergency travel document to travel to your destination through a maximum of 5 countries. You can also normally use it to return to the country you're applying from if you live there.

LOST PASSPORTS

Your travel plans (countries and dates) will be printed on your emergency travel document. If you change your travel plans once you have your emergency travel document, you'll need to apply for a new one.

If your final destination is the UK, border staff will keep your emergency travel document when you arrive. Border staff at a different final destination might also keep the document. You can apply online.

It costs £100 to apply for an emergency travel document. The fee is not refundable. You can pay online as part of your application. If you do not, you'll be asked to pay over the phone.

You might need to attend an appointment at your nearest British embassy, high commission or consulate after you apply online. You'll be told after you've submitted your application whether you need an appointment.

You'll need to give a contact telephone number and email address as part of your application.

Your emergency travel document will normally be ready 2 working days after you apply.

[LINK HERE](#)

There is no guarantee that your replacement will be available in time to meet your scheduled flight.

**Contact us for assistance
+44 7479 203205**

FCDO INFORMATION

Check your passport is stamped when you enter Croatia as a visitor. Border guards will use passport stamps to check you're complying with the 90-day visa-free limit for short stays in the Schengen area passport must be:

- Issued less than 10 years before the date you enter the country (check the 'date of issue')
- valid for at least 3 months after the day you plan to leave (check the 'expiry date')

Travellers are no longer required to complete an online entry form before arriving in Croatia. However, all third country nationals (including British citizens) must register their arrival in Croatia via their accommodation provider within 1 day, or with the police within 48 hours of arrival.

Travellers are not required to show a COVID-19 vaccine certificate, proof of a negative test, or a certificate of recovery to enter Croatia

Healthcare

You should apply for a free UK Global Health Insurance Card (GHIC) or European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) before leaving the UK. If you already have an EHIC, it will still be valid as long as it remains in date.

GHIC or EHIC cards entitle you to state provided medical treatment that may become necessary during your trip. Any treatment provided is on the same terms as Croatian nationals. If you don't have your EHIC with you or you've lost it, you can call the NHS Overseas Healthcare Team on +44 191 218 1999 to get a Provisional Replacement Certificate.

It's important to take out appropriate travel insurance for your needs. A GHIC or EHIC is not an alternative to travel insurance and you should have both before you travel. It does not cover all health-related costs, for example, medical repatriation, ongoing medical treatment and non-urgent treatment.

FCDO INFORMATION

Local laws and customs

We recommend that you carry your passport, it is the only officially recognised form of identification in Croatia but keep it safe.

Keep a photocopy of the biographical details page in a safe place, including details of your next of kin.

You should respect local laws and customs at all times. In some Croatian town centres, authorities may issue on the spot fines for inappropriate behaviour, such as walking through towns shirtless or in swimwear, wearing clothing that promotes drug use, or sleeping in public areas. Most towns have signage to advise about actions that are prohibited by local law. You should take notice of your surroundings, including signage, and take local advice if unsure.

Drug related offences are punishable with fines and jail sentences.

FCDO INFORMATION

Crime

Crime levels are low and violent crime is rare. Some tourists have been the victims of overcharging in so-called 'Gentlemen's Clubs', sometimes amounting to thousands of Euros. Victims can be threatened with violence if they refuse to pay. Take care in busy tourist areas, where pickpockets are known to operate. Avoid carrying large amounts of cash. Don't leave valuables unattended, particularly on the beach. Use a hotel safe if possible.

Report all incidents of crime to the local police station and get a police report. Approximately 727,555 British nationals visited Croatia in 2022. Most visits are trouble-free.

Money

As of 01 January 2023, the currency of Croatia is the euro. Croatian kuna was still be accepted until 15 January, it can be exchanged for euros at Croatian banks until the end of 2023.

Major credit and debit cards are accepted in most banks and hotels. Most ATMs accept standard international credit and debit cards.

Pounds sterling and US dollars are easily exchanged for euros. Only exchange money at reliable places such as banks and currency exchange bureaux.

CROATIAN WORDS & PHRASES

Yes	Da
No	Ne
Thank you	Hvala
Please	Molim
Hi	Bok
Good morning	Dobro jutro
Good afternoon	Dobar Dan
Good Night	laku noć
Can you speak English?	Govoriš li engleski?
Water	Voda
Beer/lager	Pivo
Coffee	Kava
Tea	čaj
Breakfast	Doručak
Lunch	ručak
Football stadium	nogometni stadion
Train Station	željeznička stanica
Airport	zračna luka

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