

MEDIA KIT



ESPLANADE
ZAGREB HOTEL



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More than a century of iconic heritage, timeless elegance and extraordinary stories

There are places that belong to a city, and then there are places that become part of its story. Esplanade is one of them. For more than a century, its elegant presence has stood at the heart of Zagreb, welcoming travellers from around the world while remaining deeply woven into the rhythm of the city itself.

Opened on **22 April 1925** to welcome passengers of the legendary **Orient Express**, Esplanade was born in an era when travel was an art and hotels were places where worlds came together. From the very beginning, its grand interiors, gracious service and central location made it a natural meeting place for travellers, artists, statesmen, royalty and Zagreb's own social and cultural circles.

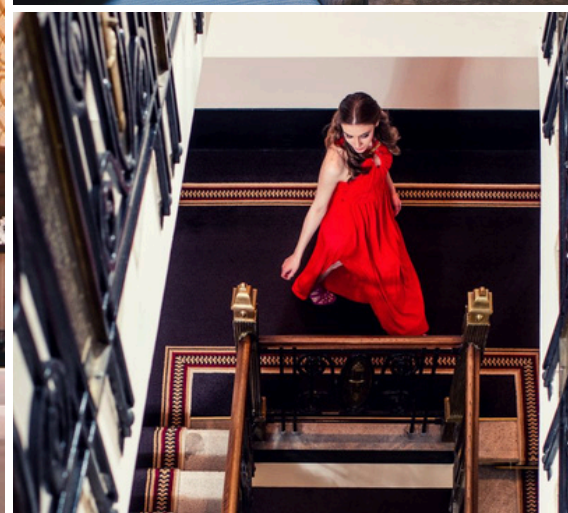
A century later, the spirit of that era still lingers in the hotel's Art Deco interiors, while life continues to unfold around it. Guests arrive from across the globe, locals gather for coffee and cocktails, celebrations fill its grand rooms, and the hotel's restaurants continue to put Croatian flavours on the international table. Here, the glamour of a grand European hotel meets the warmth and character of Zagreb.

Set beside the city's Main Railway Station and within walking distance of its historic centre, Esplanade is both a destination in its own right and a gateway to the city beyond its doors. Its location has always been part of its magic — a place where journeys begin, stories cross paths and Zagreb reveals itself.

Through changing eras, generations and tastes, Esplanade has remained remarkably constant in one respect: it has always been a place where people come together. Its architecture carries the memory of another age, while its people, flavours and experiences continue to write new chapters.

More than a historic hotel, Esplanade is a living part of Zagreb — a place where the past is present, the present feels timeless, and every new arrival becomes part of the story.







FACTS

Name:	Esplanade Zagreb Hotel
Owner company:	WSF Group, Vienna, Austria EU
Address:	Mihanovićeve 1, 10000 Zagreb, Croatia, EU
Telephone:	+385 1 4566 666
Email:	info@esplanade.hr
Website:	www.esplanade.hr
Opened:	22 April 1925
Major renovation:	2002–2004
Interior design:	MKV Design, London, led by Maria Vafiadis
Current renovation:	2026–2027
General Manager:	Ivica Max Krizmanić
Executive Chef:	Ana Grgić Tomić
Rooms and suites:	208
Meeting and event spaces:	12 versatile venues
Restaurants:	Zinfandel's Restaurant and Le Bistro Esplanade
Bar:	Esplanade 1925 Lounge & Cocktail Bar
Outdoor venue:	Oleander Terrace / Le Bistrot Terrace
Health & Gym:	Esplanade Health Club
Memberships / affiliations:	Global Hotel Alliance (GHA) DISCOVERY Virtuoso Preferred
Recent Milestones:	One MICHELIN Key 2025 50Best Discovery 2026



SINCE 1925

Born from the golden age of travel

The Esplanade was built in 1925 during the golden age of rail travel, specifically to provide luxury accommodation for passengers travelling on the famous Orient Express route connecting Paris, Venice, Zagreb and Istanbul. From the moment it opened, the hotel was conceived as much more than a place to stay: it was a glamorous gateway to Zagreb and one of the city's most prestigious social addresses.

The arrival of the Orient Express placed Zagreb on an increasingly international travel map, and the Esplanade quickly became synonymous with sophistication, cosmopolitan life and exceptional hospitality.

Over the decades, its guest book has included royalty, presidents, politicians, artists, writers, musicians, film stars and sporting legends. Among the celebrated names associated with the hotel are Josephine Baker, Orson Welles, Sophia Loren, Tina Turner, Sting, U2 and many other internationally recognised figures.

The hotel's history is also filled with stories that have become part of Zagreb folklore — from distinguished guests and grand celebrations to extraordinary culinary encounters and memorable moments in the hotel's restaurants and bar.

The Esplanade has always been closely connected with the city around it. Its legendary Oleander Terrace became one of Zagreb's most fashionable meeting places and was famously described by Croatian writer Miroslav Krleža as the place "where the Balkans end and civilisation begins".

[History Booklet](#)





AT THE HEART OF ZAGREB'S STORY

From the very beginning, Esplanade was more than a hotel. It quickly established itself as a centre of Zagreb's social and cultural life, a place where the city's leading figures gathered and where international travellers, artists, politicians and royalty crossed paths. Its grand ballroom became a stage for glamorous celebrations and important occasions, while the hotel itself became synonymous with cosmopolitan life in Zagreb.

Opened on 22 April 1925 and designed by Croatian architect Dionis Sunko, the hotel was built to accommodate passengers travelling on the legendary Orient Express. Its privileged location beside Zagreb's railway station helped make it a natural meeting point for an increasingly international city. In its first decades, Esplanade welcomed celebrated guests including Josephine Baker and aviator Charles Lindbergh, as well as numerous members of royal families, politicians and artists.

Throughout its history, the hotel has repeatedly been a pioneer. In 1964, Esplanade became the first hotel in a socialist country to join InterContinental Hotels Corporation, introducing international standards of hospitality and encouraging local producers to meet its exacting requirements. It was also home to the country's first casino, opened in 1967, and later introduced Zagreb to new culinary and lifestyle trends, from champagne and wine by the glass to tiramisu and Valentine's Day celebrations.

Its international standing continued to grow. In 1988, Esplanade became the first hotel from a socialist country to join The Leading Hotels of the World, and in 2003 it became the first Regent hotel in Europe. These milestones reflected the hotel's unique position at the intersection of Zagreb and the wider world.

Following a major renovation between 2002 and 2004, the hotel reopened with its historic character carefully preserved and a renewed vision for the future. Its neoclassical and Art Deco heritage was brought together with contemporary hospitality, while new landmarks such as Zinfandel's and Esplanade 1925 Lounge & Cocktail Bar became part of its evolving identity.



ROOMS & SUITES

The Esplanade offers 208 spacious rooms and suites, designed to combine Art Deco character with contemporary comfort. Historic details, elegant furnishings, marble bathrooms and generous proportions create a sense of timeless refinement, while modern amenities ensure a comfortable stay.

The accommodation includes:

- 146 Superior Rooms, approximately 25–28 sqm
- 43 Deluxe Rooms, approximately 35–36 sqm, with additional living space
- 5 Junior Suites, approximately 45–52 sqm
- 13 Deluxe Suites, approximately 60 sqm, with separate living areas
- 1 Esplanade Presidential Suite, approximately 120 sqm

The Esplanade Suite is the hotel's signature residence, featuring a spacious living and dining area, a small kitchen with discreet service access, a spacious bathroom with Jacuzzi bath and private sauna, and an adjoining bedroom. Views extend towards the hotel's terrace and fountain park.

All rooms feature superfast Wi-Fi, interactive entertainment, personal bars/minibars and elegant marble bathrooms. The hotel also offers personalised touches including 24-hour room service, concierge and laundry services.



AMENITIES AND SERVICES

- Two signature restaurants
- Famous Bar
- Health Club with fitness area, sauna, spa therapies, facial and body treatments
- Outstanding conference facilities with spectacular ballroom
- Business centre
- Free wireless super fast Internet access
- Turn-down service
- L'Occitane cosmetics
- Free overnight shoeshine service
- 24-hour room, laundry and concierge service
- Valet parking and limousine service
- "Very Important Dog" programme
- Tesla and Porsche destination chargers





MEETINGS, EVENTS & CELEBRATIONS

For more than a century, the Esplanade has been one of Zagreb's most prestigious venues for social and business occasions.

The hotel offers 12 versatile meeting and event spaces, ranging from intimate boardrooms and private dining rooms to large-scale conference and gala facilities. Natural daylight, modern audiovisual equipment and experienced event teams allow the spaces to be adapted for conferences, business meetings, weddings, fashion shows, banquets, diplomatic receptions, gala dinners and private celebrations.

Emerald Ballroom

The spectacular Emerald Ballroom, with its soaring domed ceiling and elegant historic character, is the hotel's signature event space. It can accommodate up to 365 guests and has hosted generations of important celebrations, weddings, state events, concerts, fashion shows and gala occasions.

Istanbul Suite

A flexible conference space accommodating up to 185 guests, the Istanbul Suite can be divided into three separate rooms and adapted to a variety of event formats.



Paris Suite

The Paris Suite accommodates up to 150 delegates and can also be divided into three separate spaces, making it suitable for conferences, presentations and private functions.

Venice Room

The Venice Room provides an elegant setting for smaller meetings and events, accommodating up to 125 guests.

Boardroom with Business Centre

The historic Boardroom combines a business centre and lounge with a preserved furniture, providing an intimate setting for small meetings and private dining for up to 12 guests.

The hotel also operates a highly experienced outside catering service, bringing Esplanade's culinary expertise to private and corporate events beyond the hotel.

Floorplan





ESP CATERING

Esplanade hospitality beyond the hotel

Esplanade's culinary expertise extends beyond its restaurants through its bespoke catering service.

The hotel's experienced culinary and events teams create tailored menus and experiences for corporate events, conferences, gala dinners, weddings, private celebrations and exclusive gatherings.

Whether an event takes place in one of Esplanade's historic venues or at an external location, the catering team brings the hotel's signature approach to gastronomy, service and presentation to every occasion.





GOURMET STORY

A century of culinary excellence

Gastronomy has been part of the Esplanade story since its earliest days. The hotel has long been a place where Zagreb's culinary traditions meet international influences, from the glamour of early 20th-century dining to contemporary Croatian cuisine.

Today, the hotel's culinary offer is led by Executive Chef Ana Grgić Tomić, who oversees both of its signature restaurants, Zinfandel's and Le Bistro, as well as the hotel's catering operation.

The culinary philosophy combines Croatia's rich gastronomic heritage with seasonal ingredients, contemporary techniques and international inspiration, with a strong focus on local produce and sustainability.



ZINFANDEL'S RESTAURANT

Fine dining with a Croatian signature and Mediterranean influence

Zinfandel's is the Esplanade's signature fine-dining restaurant, offering contemporary cuisine rooted in Croatian culinary traditions.

Under the direction of Chef Ana Grgić Tomić, the restaurant combines seasonal local ingredients with creative techniques and international influences. Its elegant interior and views towards the Oleander Terrace provide a sophisticated setting for intimate dinners, business lunches and special celebrations.

The restaurant's name pays tribute to the Zinfandel grape, whose origins are linked to Croatia's Dalmatian coast before the variety became famous in California — an appropriate symbol for a restaurant that brings Croatian heritage together with a global perspective.

Zinfandel's has received numerous international recognitions. It was named European Hotel Restaurant of the Year 2023 at the European Hotel Awards, while Chef Ana Grgić Tomić received the Special Award Étoile Blanche from the World Gastronomy Organisation.

In 2021, Zinfandel's became the first restaurant in Croatia to receive the MICHELIN Green Star, recognising its commitment to sustainable gastronomy. The restaurant has also been recognised for its work in reducing food waste and promoting responsible sourcing.

Its wine list features an extensive selection of Croatian and international wines.

[Visit web!](#)

Zinfandel's
restaurant





LE BISTRO ESPLANADE

Parisian charm with a Zagreb soul

Le Bistro has been part of Zagreb's culinary scene since 1986 and has become one of the city's best-known meeting places.

The restaurant combines the atmosphere of a classic Parisian bistro with Croatian culinary traditions and seasonal local ingredients. Its menu changes with the seasons and regularly showcases ingredients such as Istrian truffles, wild asparagus, mushrooms and locally grown fruit.

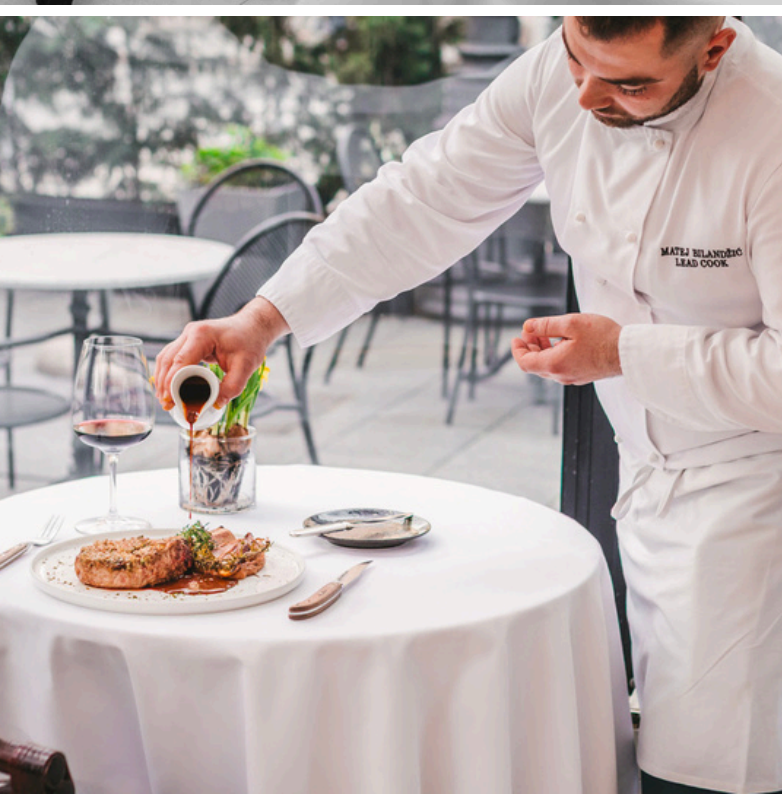
Le Bistro is equally suited to breakfast, a leisurely lunch, business meetings, afternoon coffee or dinner. Its glazed interior and lively terrace create an atmosphere that is elegant without being formal.

But Le Bistro's most famous culinary creation is undoubtedly the Esplanade Štrukli.

[Visit web!](#)

Le
Bistro
Esplanade





ESPLANADE ŠTRUKLI

A Zagreb culinary icon since 1951

Few dishes are as closely associated with the Esplanade as its legendary štrukli.

A traditional speciality from the Croatian region of Zagorje, just north of Zagreb, štrukli are made from thinly stretched dough filled with fresh cottage cheese, folded and baked with cream.

The Esplanade first introduced štrukli to its menu in 1951, following the hotel's tradition of researching and celebrating authentic Croatian regional recipes. More than seven decades later, the dish remains one of the hotel's most recognisable culinary signatures.

Handmade according to the traditional method, Esplanade Štrukli have evolved from a regional home-cooking speciality into an internationally recognised hotel classic.

They can be enjoyed at Le Bistro and in other areas of the hotel, and are also available in a gluten-free version.





CHEF ANA GRGIĆ TOMIĆ

A modern ambassador of Croatian cuisine

Ana Grgić Tomić's journey at Esplanade began 26 years ago, when she joined the hotel as a young culinary school graduate. Since 2012, she has led the hotel's culinary team, making history as the first woman to head its kitchen.

Her cooking is defined by a deep respect for Croatian ingredients and traditions combined with contemporary techniques and international influences. Over the course of her career, she has trained and worked with acclaimed international chefs.

Her culinary journey has taken her to leading kitchens around the world, while her work at Esplanade has focused on placing Croatian ingredients and culinary heritage in a contemporary international context.

Chef Ana has prepared meals for royalty, presidents, world leaders and internationally recognised personalities such as Hillary Clinton, Prince Albert of Monaco, King Charles III, Cristiano Ronaldo, David Beckham, Sting, Shakira, Will Smith and many others.

Her achievements include being named Gault&Millau Chef of the Year 2022 in Croatia, while her commitment to sustainable gastronomy has been recognised through Zinfandel's MICHELIN Green Star few years in a row.

Ana Grgić Tomić was also an ambassador of the WWF Fish Forward initiative, promoting responsible consumption of seafood and greater awareness of the environmental and social impact of fisheries.



ESPLANADE

1925 LOUNGE & COCKTAIL BAR

A century of stories and sips

The Esplanade 1925 Lounge & Cocktail Bar continues the hotel's long tradition as one of Zagreb's most cosmopolitan meeting places.

Set within the hotel's Art Deco interiors, the bar blends historic character with contemporary cocktail culture. A vibrant meeting place from day into late evening, it brings together hotel guests, Zagreb locals, business leaders, creatives and international visitors, creating a lively crossroads of the city's social scene.

The bar's cocktail offer is led by Vjenceslav Madić, Master Kishoni, whose creative approach has transformed the Esplanade bar into one of Zagreb's most distinctive cocktail destinations.

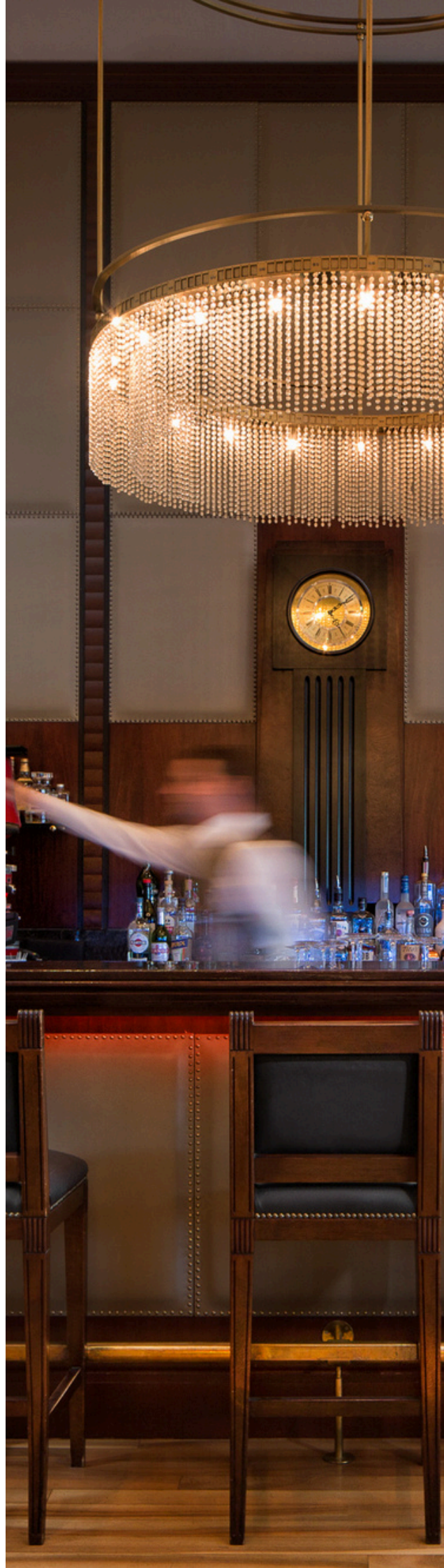
The drinks list features signature cocktails, modern interpretations of classics, premium spirits, Champagne and sparkling wines, craft beers, fresh and cold-pressed juices, fine teas and premium coffee.

The bar also offers a selection of savoury and sweet dishes from Chef Ana Grgić Tomic's kitchen, including the famous Club Sandwich, Esplanade burger, tuna tataki, Esplanade Štrukli and desserts as well as the famous Orient Express Afternoon Tea.

The bar is open daily until 2 a.m., continuing its tradition as one of Zagreb's favourite places for an evening drink, business meeting or late-night gathering.

[Visit web!](#)

ESPLANADE 1925
LOUNGE & COCKTAIL BAR





OLEANDER TERRACE

Zagreb's timeless social terrace

The Oleander Terrace has been one of Zagreb's most celebrated outdoor meeting places for generations.

With views over the city and the hotel's fountain park, the terrace captures the social spirit of the Esplanade — a place for long lunches, leisurely coffee, afternoon tea, Champagne, cocktails and summer evenings.

Its history is inseparable from Zagreb's café culture and social life. The terrace has welcomed generations of prominent guests and locals and remains one of the city's most recognisable settings for outdoor dining and social occasions.





ESPLANADE HEALTH CLUB

A private retreat in the heart of the city

The Esplanade Health Club provides a peaceful wellness retreat within the hotel.

Facilities include a gym area and sauna, complemented by a selection of facial and body treatments designed to help guests relax, recharge and revitalise.

The Esplanade Health Club also has a long-standing connection with premium beauty and wellness brands.

[Health Club Brochure](#)





AWARDS & RECOGNITION

Esplanade Zagreb Hotel has received numerous national and international awards recognising its exceptional service, heritage, design, gastronomy and contribution to Croatian hospitality.

Among its notable recognitions are:

- 2026 – Selected for inclusion in the prestigious international **50 Best Discovery** platform.
- 2025 – Awarded **One MICHELIN Key**, recognising its exceptional hospitality, character, architecture and guest experience.
- 2025 – Named **Art Deco Hotel of the Year** at the European Hotel Awards in Vilnius.
- 2025 – **Ivica Max Krizmanić, General Manager of Esplanade Zagreb Hotel**, named European Hotel Manager of the Year 2025 by the European Hotel Managers Association (**EHMA**) in Warsaw.
- 2024 – **Sanda Sokol**, Director of PR & Marketing, honoured with the prestigious **Luxury Hotel Public Relations of the Year 2024 award** at the European Hotel Awards in Copenhagen.
- 2023 – **Chef Ana Grgić Tomić** received the **Special Award Étoile Blanche** from the World Gastronomy Organisation, while **Zinfandel's** was named **European Hotel Restaurant of the Year** in Barcelona.
- 2022 – Ranked among the **10 Best Hotels in Central Europe** by **Condé Nast Traveler** in its Readers' Choice Awards.
- 2022 – **Ivica Max Krizmanić** named **Best General Manager in Southern Europe** at the World Luxury Hotel Awards.
- 2022 – Ana Grgić Tomić named **Gault&Millau Chef of the Year** in Zagreb.
- 2019 – Named **Best European Historic Hotel** at the European Hotel Awards in Geneva.
- 2018 – Named **Croatia's Hotel of the Year** and Best City Hotel at the Croatian Tourism Awards.

In addition, Esplanade has received numerous recognitions from leading international hotel, travel and culinary organisations, including World Luxury Hotel Awards, Condé Nast Traveler and TripAdvisor.



GHA DISCOVERY

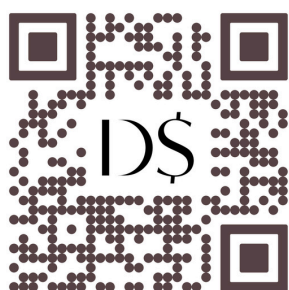
A world of rewards, recognition and experiences

Since 2026 Esplanade Zagreb Hotel is part of Global Hotel Alliance (GHA), the world's largest alliance of independent hotel brands, bringing together 55 brands, 1,000 hotels across 100 countries and 36 million members.

Through its participation in GHA DISCOVERY, Esplanade guests can join a global loyalty programme offering personalised recognition, rewards in the form of D\$ (DISCOVERY Dollars) and exclusive experiences across participating hotels and partners.

Membership is free and provides benefits not only when staying at participating hotels, but also through selected local experiences and offers.

For Esplanade, joining GHA DISCOVERY represents a new chapter in the hotel's international journey, connecting its long-standing tradition of personalised hospitality with a global community of travellers.



GHA DISCOVERY

[Explore and sign up now!](#)



LOCATION

The Esplanade is situated in the very heart of Zagreb, beside the city's Main Railway Station and within walking distance of the capital's principal cultural, historical and shopping attractions.

Nearby highlights include:

- Croatian National Theatre
- Botanical Garden
- Archaeological Museum
- Mimara Museum
- Museum of Contemporary Art
- Museum of Broken Relationships
- Zagreb's Upper Town (Gornji Grad)
- St Mark's Church
- Lotrščak Tower
- Stone Gate
- Dolac Market
- Ban Jelačić Square
- Strossmayer Promenade

Zagreb Airport: approximately 25 minutes by car

Main Railway Station: approximately 1 minute on foot

Central Bus Station: approximately 10 minutes on foot



ESPLANADE TODAY

More than a century has passed since Esplanade first opened its doors, yet its story is still unfolding in the heart of Zagreb.

Time has changed the city around it, generations have come and gone, and countless footsteps have crossed its marble floors. Still, the hotel remains a place where worlds meet — where travellers arrive and locals return, where important occasions are celebrated and ordinary moments quietly become cherished ones.

Its walls have witnessed grand celebrations and intimate encounters, whispered conversations and joyful reunions. Here, a first visit to Zagreb can become a lasting memory; a dinner can become a family tradition; a coffee can stretch into an afternoon; and a cocktail shared at the bar can become part of a story told years later.

Perhaps this is the true meaning of heritage: not simply preserving what came before, but giving every new generation a place to create something of its own. Esplanade's architecture carries the beauty of another era, while its people, flavours and moments continue to give it life.

And so, after more than 100 years, Esplanade remains more than a hotel. It is a living thread through Zagreb's past and present — a place where history is not simply remembered, but experienced, celebrated and, every day, quietly rewritten.





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SOCIAL MEDIA



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