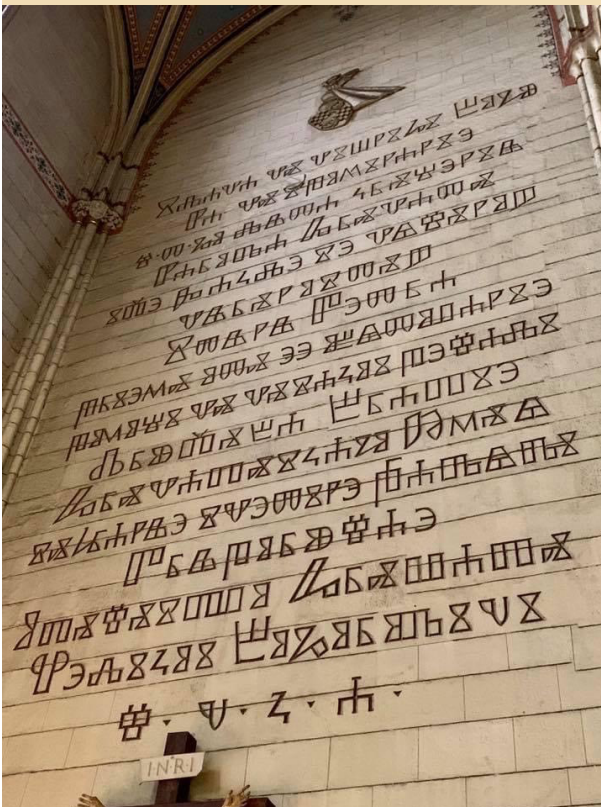


# An Unforgettable Experience in Croatia

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Picture 1: The name Croatia means “Bring water”. This is where the name Croatia was first created.



Picture 2: The ancient Glagolitic language of Yugoslavia carved on the water of the Cathedral for Holy Mary

I was not familiar with Croatia at all before I visited this small country located between Central and Southeast Europe.

In recent years, Croatia has attracted a huge number of tourists to its very famous Plitvice Lakes National Park. However, along with the booming of the tourism industry, Croatia is also encountering the serious problem of pick-pockets from other European countries.

We are often told that whenever we are travelling, we need to be very cautious with our wallets and handbags especially in places crowded with tourists.

And it was after this trip that I realized we should not under any circumstances assume ourselves immune from such a threat.

My friend Michelle was carrying a backpack when we were in Zagreb, the beautiful capital of Croatia with lots of attractions offering good photography spots. When we were taking a group picture in front of St. Mark’s Church, another member in our group found that the zip of Michelle’s backpack was pulled down. Her wallet was gone! Worse still, she had kept her passport in the wallet, which meant that

all her travel documents and money were stolen.

It being Sunday, she needed to go to Vienna or Budapest for the processing of new travel documents. But without an official document then, she could not leave Zagreb and enter another country. All of us in the group were stunned and did not know what to do.

It was lucky that our tour guide was a Croatian and he worked at the Education Department of the Government. He immediately called the police office, and the police car arrived after 10 minutes. The policeman in charge got all the information from Michelle and then called back to the station. Over the phone his colleague right away told him that the wallet was found with her passport, but not the money. Michelle was requested to go to the police station and go through some processes.

Why were the police so efficient? We were told that whenever our tour guide called, they immediately informed the patrol police



Picture 3: The National costume of Croatia



Picture 4: A clock saved from the major earthquake of 1880.

in that area to search for the pick pockets, mostly recidivists, hence easily identifiable.

Since the tour guide was a government official, the police did extra work to force the pick-pockets to return the money. Of all the similar cases I have heard of, I think that was the only one in which everything stolen was restored to the victim. Usually you are considered super lucky even if you can have only your passport back.

After that it happened twice again when valuable things were almost stolen from us in Zagreb. But we had learned from Michelle's case to be more cautious, thus avoiding further misfortune.

My advice is that when travelling in Europe, do not trust anyone standing near you. Keep your money and valuable items safe. Be alert at all times to ensure that you can return home with no regrets after an enjoyable journey.