

The hero from Lika, **MARIJAN MATIJEVIĆ**, was born in 1878 in Duboki Dol near Gračac. He travelled all over the world, showing off his strength. After marrying, he settled in Županja, where he was buried in 1951. Once the strongest man in the world, known around the globe, he became known as Hercules with a Heart of Gold due to his kindness and innate physical strength.



**Cerovačke
špilje**
CEROVAC CAVES

The total value of the project is HRK 68,453,850.00, of which EU funds in the amount of HRK 53,233,632.80 are provided from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the Operational Programme "Competitiveness and Cohesion 2014-2020". The implementation of the project began on 4 April 2018 and will last until 31 December 2021. The overall goal of the project is to contribute to the sustainable use of natural resources, environmental protection, and protection of natural heritage by strengthening the model of sustainable management of protected areas of the Republic of Croatia, as well as those of the European Union. This, in turn, helps develop and diversify the Adriatic region's tourist offer, thus contributing to its sustainable socio-economic development. The specific goal of the project is to develop a new, competitive, and integrated tourist offer by developing a new supported infrastructure for visitors in the area of the Velebit Nature Park, to increase the park's educational, interpretive, and professional and scientific potential, and to establish an efficient and sustainable management and business system of the Velebit Nature Park.

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ZADARSKA
ŽUPANIJA



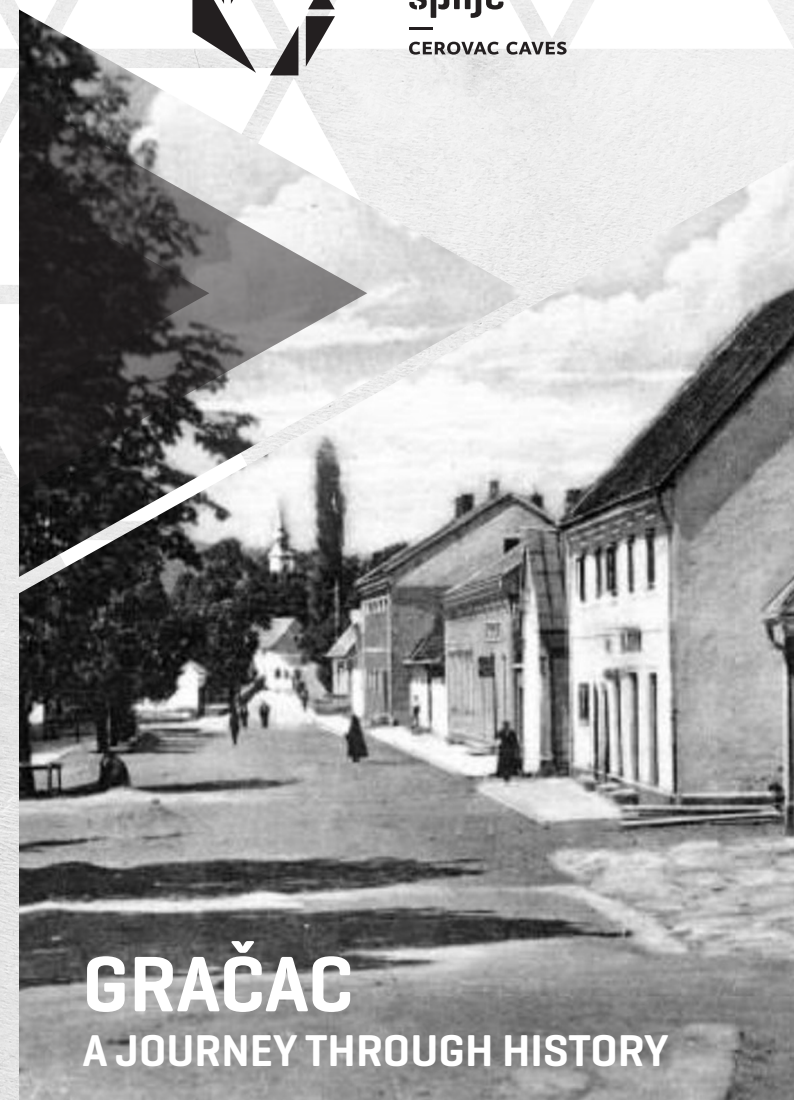
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ZAGREBAČKI SPELEOLOŠKI
SAVEZ



**Cerovačke
špilje**
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GRAČAC

A JOURNEY THROUGH HISTORY



EUROPSKA UNIJA
Zajedno do fondova EU



EUROPSKI STRUKTURNI
I INVESTICIJSKI FONDovi



Operativni program
KONKURENTNOST
I KOHEZIJA

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For more information on EU funds:
www.strukturnifondovi.hr



In 1318, Jakob from the Gusić family ruled the town as prefect.

From 1465, it was in the possession of Count Karl Kurjaković, and from 1509, of Count Ivan Karlović.

In 1527, the Ottomans conquered Gračac, and from then until 1689, it was part of the Udbina or Lika captaincy. In 1574, the Gradčac nahiye was founded.

From 1689 to 1881, Gračac was under military administration, after which it became part of Civil Croatia. The development of the settlement of Gračac further improved after the liberation from the Turks, in the period of the Croatian Military Frontier, as an important defensive point against Turkish Bosnia. During that time, in 1789, a new strategic military road connecting Gospić, Gračac and Knin was built, which was intended to replace the former medieval road passing through Bihać. The transport importance of Gračac further increased after the opening of the Lika railway in 1925.

In 1991, during the Croatian War of Independence, Gračac was taken over as an important centre in the transport network between the occupied areas. It was liberated in August 1995. Before the Croatian War of Independence, Gračac was a trade centre for the textile, leather, wood, and food industries.

SPATIALLY THE LARGEST MUNICIPALITY IN CROATIA

Gračac is located in a wide valley in southern Lika. The town developed at the intersection of the roads from Gospić to Knin, and Krbava to Dalmatia. It is separated from Dalmatia by the high mountain of Velebit, with the road between Gračac and Obrovac passing through the "Prezid" mountain pass. With an area of 957.19 km², the municipality of Gračac is the largest municipality in Croatia.

It is first mentioned in the charter of Mladen I of Bribir from 1302 as the central fortress of Gradac in Otuća County [Gradac, castra Gradecz]. At that time in the Gračac area, the medieval Croatian noble parish of Otuća was inhabited by noble Croatian families who preserved their freedom and the right to self-government. Traces of the medieval town on Gradina near the Catholic church preserve the remains of the seat of that old Croatian noble parish, after which, presumably, Gračac got its name.



The famous baroque Roman Catholic parish church of St. George from the 18th century was badly damaged in World War II. It contains a late Baroque epitaph of the Croatian Count Knežević from 1781.

"Gate of Dalmatia" – Due to its position, the old fortress of Zvonigrad was in the past called the "Gate of Dalmatia". On the right bank of the Zrmanja River, on a prominent hill above the Gračac–Knin road, there are significant and solid walls and towers, the remains of the town of Zvonigrad, which was the centre of the old Croatian medieval parish of Odorje, built by the Croatian King Dmitar Zvonimir.

In Gračac, there is also the temple of the Serbian Orthodox Church of the Ascension of the Lord, built in 1874, which was damaged in the Second World War.

