



*Elementary School Banija*

*Street of Gaje Petrović 5*

*e - mail: [os-banija@os-banija-ka.skole.hr](mailto:os-banija@os-banija-ka.skole.hr)*

*Website: <http://os-banija-ka.skole.hr/>*

*School director: Antonija Mastelić Milanović*



*Merry Christmas  
everybody!*



*In this letter we will tell you a bit about how we celebrate Christmas in our school and Croatia. You are welcome to contact us on e-mail if there is something you want to know more about general information.*



## General information

### *Where is our school located?*

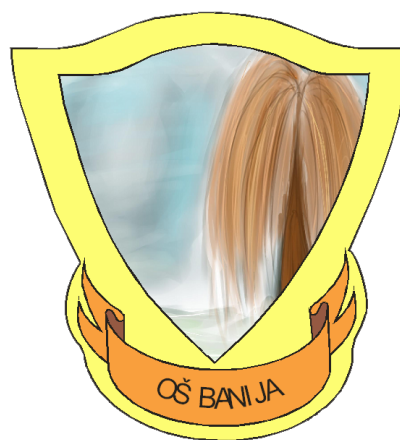
Our school is located in city Karlovac, in the central Croatia, near the river Kupa and church Holy three kings. Banija is a part of Karlovac where our school is situated. School was built in 1961. Karlovac is a beautiful city with a lot of culture. It has about 53 134 citizens. There are four river that go through the city. The names of the rivers are the Kupa, Korana, Dobra and Mrežnica. Karlovac is made in the shape of six-pointed star. Protector of our city is St. Joseph who is also the patron of our country.





## *School anthem / Himna škole*

Lijepa naša školo mila  
puno si nam pružila:  
znanje, igru i veselje  
što su naše najveće želje.  
Učiteljima si snagu dala,  
da sa smiješkom na sat dođu,  
a nama da prijateljstva nikada ne prođu.  
Potpora nam vjerna bila i snove  
ostvarila,  
a vjernost našu ocjene najbolje pokažu!



*School emblem*



## School day

We celebrate a school day each year 25th May. We organize school event and sports games for students. It is our favourite day and we are enjoying and having fun.





## Christmas in our school

Every year we organize a Christmas fair. Students, parents and school workers make Christmas decorations, cakes, lip balms, paint bags, and collect toys. There are also apple juice, vinegar, candle and knitted ornaments from our student co-operative. This is how we celebrate Christmas in our school.





## *Christmas decoration for our group in project*

Our decorations and greeting cards were made with traditional embroidery and were made by students with the help of teachers. We are pleased that this project involved teachers from all areas and they, in their personal interest, helped in the creation of this work. Main theme for this project was Croatian old letter, Glagolitic alphabet.





## *What language do we speak?*

We speak Croatian language. Everyone says that we learn languages fast.

## *The capital city*

The capital city of Croatia is **Zagreb**. It has 801.349 residents. Every year we have advent in Zagreb. That is the most beautiful time of the year, and it looks like this.





## *Our old letter*

Glagolitic is an Old Slavic letter originated in the middle of the 9th century which remained in the Croatian regions until the 19th century. Already at the beginning of the 16th century, Latin is increasingly suppressed. The author of this letter is Ćiril, an Byzantine monk from Solun. Cyril (the real name Konstantin), on the basis of the Macedonian Slavic languages from the surroundings of Solun, prepared a letter and translated the ecclesiastical books. Because of this we decided to give you an example of one letter of Glagolitic alphabet and each country will get one letter of the whole sentence which in our language means Merry Christmas: “Sretan Božić”.

	<b>A</b>		<b>B</b>		<b>C</b>
	<b>D</b>		<b>E</b>		<b>F</b>
	<b>G</b>		<b>H</b>		<b>I</b>
	<b>J</b>		<b>K</b>		<b>L</b>
	<b>M</b>		<b>N</b>		<b>O</b>
	<b>P</b>		<b>R</b>		<b>S</b>
	<b>T</b>		<b>U</b>		<b>V</b>
	<b>Z</b>				





## *Adriatic sea*

The beauty of the country is our sea. The sea has over 1000 islands. The largest island is Krk and the largest peninsula is Istria.



## *What climate do we have?*

Our four seasons is:

Spring - March until May

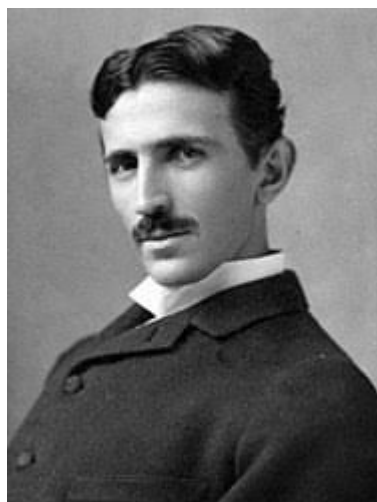
Summer - June until August

Autumn - September until November

Winter - December until February



## *Famous people from Croatia*



Nikola Tesla was the inventor of electricity (July 10 1856).  
Born in Lika, but almost all his life worked in the United States where he invented all his inventions.

Eduard Slavoljub Penkala (April 20 1871) was the inventor of the pen.  
Croatian chemistry engineer and inventor of Polish origin.



The necktie is a decorative garment that is worn around the neck beneath the collar of silk or some other material. The tie is considered to be the original Croatian product and spread to Europe in the 17th century through the Croatian soldiers in the Thirty Years' War, where it became a recognizable fashion detail. It was accepted by the French, and in their language was called cravate, and later it spread in other European languages with similar names.





## *Traditional decorations*

Licitar are colorfully decorated biscuits made of sweet honey dough that are part of Croatia's cultural heritage. The tradition of making licitar started in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. Licitar is traditionally produced in the central and lowland part of Croatia. At Christmas time, the city of Zagreb and the Christmas tree in the main square in particular are decorated with thousands of licitar hearts.



Wooden toys are traditional handicraft of Croatian Zagorje from the mid of 19<sup>th</sup> century. The toys are made by hand by men, then floral and geometric motifs are painted on them by women. Wooden toys are part of the UNESCO cultural heritage list.



Christmas decorations in Croatia are also made out of natural materials such as straw or corn husks.

## *Croatian Christmas traditions*

Croatian Christmas customs are part of the Croatian tradition. Along with the Christmas celebration, numerous customs have been developed, such as Christmas tree trinkets on Christmas Eve, Christmas Message, Christmas songs and gifts. The





preparations for Christmas last about a month (Advent). We celebrate st. Barbare, st. Nikola, sv. Lucius and St. Tom. Christmas wheat is sown at St. Barbara or St. Lucia's Day. The children are especially delighted with the St. Nicholas, when they get gifts in their boots, and nasty kids kick of the Krampus.

Another tradition specific to the Croatian Christmas is the bowl of green wheat, which symbolizes the "new bread." Wheat seeds are planted by females on the feast day of St. Lucia (December 13) and are expected to sprout and grow about 8 inches high by Christmas Eve when they are usually tied with ribbons in the national colors of the Croatian flag and placed under the Christmas tree. In some homes, a candle is placed in the middle of the wheat as a symbol for the souls of the people. The folk believes that if the wheat is tall and dense, a prosperous year will follow. Although many people prefer to grow the wheat at homes, Christmas wheat is today also sold by florists and at Christmas markets.



### ***Croatian national costumes***

Croatian national costumes are nowadays most often worn at special events and celebrations. Croatians are proud of their cultural heritage and at folklore events you can see all generations from young to old dressed in local traditional costumes, singing traditional songs and dancing their specific dances. Each cultural and geographical region in Croatia has its own costumes that vary in style, material, colour, shape, and form. Differences in costume are associated with the social status of the wearer, like an unmarried girl or a married woman. The regions Medimurje, Zagorje and Zagreb are all located in the north of Croatia and they



have the continental style of dress. White garments are typical for the continental region, but each has its own decorative scarves, shawls, aprons, and jewellery.

Red is the most popular colour, especially in Zagorje, and the aprons and vests worn by the men and women are red with elaborate stitching and embroidery, mostly with gold thread. Women wear colourful shawls and kerchiefs which are usually red with flower designs. The second most popular color is black, which can have gold or white embroidery, or none at all. Men usually wear wide white trousers and blouses and black hats and boots.





## *Christmas and straw*

In the house, the father of the family usually fed a slag that would spread on the floor, symbolizing Jesus' birth in a straw stall. The straw would be placed under the table singing the Christmas song. From the rest of the straw, wreaths and beams symbolizing fertility and good yields would be made.



## *Traditional Christmas food in Croatia*

For Croatians, the big day in the Christmas period is “Badnji Dan” (Christmas Eve Day) and “Badnja Večer” (Christmas Eve Night). Since Christmas Eve is a fasting day, traditionally on Christmas Eve, Croatians eat a small meal in the evening. Traditional Christmas food in Croatia is different from one region to another.

## *Christmas food in Dalmatia*

Bakalar (dried cod-fish) is served with a salad or cabbage in households all over Dalmatia. On Christmas Day is usually eaten turkey and very often stew (pašticada), which is





prepared from the finest beef. Cakes are made from dried fruits like almonds in Split and its surroundings or of figs and carob trees on the island of Vis.

### *Christmas food in Slavonia*

Christmas Eve Day in Slavonia begins solemnly already at breakfast with honey brandy and meatless dishes. The old habit was not to eat anything until dinner. Today, fish stew is already prepared for lunch. In addition, on the menu you can find more popular freshwater species such as trout, catfish or carp. On the Christmas Day table, there will usually be roasted beef in a sauce or chicken. Many different cookies, the walnut bread roll and poppy seed roll are especially served.



### *Christmas food in Central Croatia*

The Christmas Eve in Central Croatia is also wellknown as delicious fish dishes, most often freshwater fish and various salads, such as bean salad. In Međimurje, a roast duck will be prepared for Christmas, and roasted pork in the southern parts. In the days after Christmas, sarma (stuffed cabbage rolls) will often be on the menu.





## *Christmas food in Istra*

Today in Istria, for Christmas Eve, they usually prepare cod, fish soup or roasted sea fish. However, traditional fasting Istrian dishes are Istrian Maneštra (vegetable soup with chickpeas), posutice (a homemade pasta that used to be served only with garlic and olive oil), broskva na padelu (stewed cabbage) and supa (drink-meal made from tepid Teran wine, toasted, slightly toasted bread, olive oil, sugar and black pepper). For Christmas, the Istrian will bake turkey, and often homemade bread. As dessert are offered different cookies or bishop's breads - dried fruit biscuits.



## *Christmas food in Karlovac*

The menu on Christmas Eve Day in Karlovac area is filled with classic freshwater or sea fish dishes like in all other regions. A traditional Christmas Day meal often consists of roasted turkey, rarely chicken or roasted pork, that used to be served with mlinci, as a main course. Turkey with mlinci is a Croatian folk-cuisine specialty.

What is mlinci, you might ask. Mlinci is side dish, thin flatbread that resembles a noodle and a cracker at the same time. You can buy them already baked, but it is more fun to make them on your own, as it is very simple dish to make. You need flour, some salt and water and eggs if you prefer, or fat. When served with turkey for example, mlinci is usually broken up into pieces and then poured







over with hot water or soup or the juice of the turkey. As dessert are usually offered walnut bread roll and poppy seed roll and many other different cookies.

On this link you can find a recipes for [vanillin rolls](#), [fritule](#) and [walnut bread roll](#).



## *Christmas songs*

The most popular Christmas songs are: Radujte se narodi, U to vrijeme godišta, Tiha noć and Djetešce nam se rodilo. They are usually sung in church before Christmas or during Christmas time.

There are links for some Christmas songs:

[Narodi nam se](#)

[Djetešce nam se rodilo](#)

[Radujte se narodi](#)

[Tiha noć](#)

[Bijeli Božić](#)

[Božić dolazi](#)

[Svim na zemlji](#)

[Sretan Božić svakome](#)

[Pahuljice padajte](#)



*From all of us to all of you, we wish you all a  
Mery, Mery Christmas and a Happy New  
Year!*

*Kindly regards from Elementary School  
Banija from Karlovac, Croatia and all the  
children.*

