

NATIVE AMERICANS IN CROATIA? MOVIES COME ALIVE



Winnetou, the Native American chief and hero is one of the most admired fictional personalities. Now, he comes alive in the wonderful region of Plitvice Lakes in Croatia - alongside with an entire Indian village. What a great attraction.

The Winnetou books are a hit. Over a dozen of films were made about Winnetou, the main character, and the history of his people and the phenomenon of Indian bravery and friendship shaped the faith and beliefs of thousands when the first books were published.

Karl May, a best-selling German author of his time, created the Winnetou stories about 90 years ago and his portrayal of life in the Old West was so grasping, his work became popular almost immediately. Winnetou was a role model and the movies about him still win the ratings as most-watched in many European countries. How fascinating is the fact that Karl May himself never walked on the American soil.

As a setting for twelve out of the thirteen movies made in 1960s, the German filmmakers chose the striking **Plitvice Lake region in Croatia**. The Mountains Velebit are memorable to anyone who has seen the films and so is River Krka. The area is a natural reserve today and strictly protected - the region is immensely popular among tourists especially during the summer months. However, the locals hope that their new initiative introducing **Winnetouland**, will bring visitors all year around.

Hajduk Mrdalj is one of those whose adoration of Winnetou transformed into an idea to create an **authentic Indian village** in the area where his home was - at least on the screen. Visitors get a unique chance to see the typical wigwams, medicine men and the Indian way of life. Exciting and fun activities feature shooting with a bow and arrow, throwing horseshoes and the lasso or horse riding. Perceptive visitors will even find many artifacts from the many films.

The region will blow anyone away with its pristine beauty and charm. And the locals are very proud of it - especially now, that their hero has returned home. The famous Indian from Croatia is back with all his charisma.

Photo: Rank Film Publishers

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