

# true colours

to retake the area, resulting in the death of an officer, Josip Jovic. There was a fatality on the Serb side, too, and Serbian fighters turned the park's hotels into barracks, some staying until the Croatian army retook the area in 1995.

Staring out at the azure lagoon (below) as we take a boat to the upper lakes, it is hard to believe a place of such tranquillity could have seen such ferocity. Disembarking marks a new leg of the journey. The paths are thinner, snaking around high rocks

as we make our way up to the highest waterfall at 1,280m (4,200ft). It's quite a climb and I'm grateful when we reach the bar at the top.

After catching my breath, it's time to experience some of Croatia's other gems. Little more than an hour to the south-west hides Petrcane, a secluded fishing harbour looking out on the north Dalmatian coast. For most of the year the village is quiet but, come July, one of the best party seasons in Europe kicks off.

If you're going to experience any of the many festivals held here, the Garden Festival should be top of the list. Gearing up for its fifth year, the two-week party (July 2-11) is an infectious mix of relaxation and raving. Currently, only a

few thousand people pass through the Garden each season. This year, as always, the festival boasts an eclectic dance line-up, including Mr Scruff, Moodymann, Horse Meat Disco and Daddy G.

Although a small site, the grounds of the Hotel Piniija offer a main stage at the terrace, a 1970s circular nightclub, lovingly restored, and a beach bar with a dance floor overhanging the sea. It's quite a setting. While partygoers sun themselves with fruity cocktails during the day, they can

get down with harder beats at night. The Garden Festival also boasts twice-daily boat parties with top DJs to entertain revellers.

The sun-bleached Adriatic coast is dotted with deserted islands to explore – the ideal antidote to a fortnight of hard partying. But it's

steadily becoming the worst-kept secret in the festival calendar, so get into the Garden before everyone else finds out about it.

■ Go to [www.thegardenfestival.eu](http://www.thegardenfestival.eu) for more info. Emily flew to Zagreb with Wizz Air from Luton. Returns start at £68. Tel: 0906 959 0002. [www.wizzair.com](http://www.wizzair.com). She stayed at the Falkensteiner Club Funimation Borik in Zadar. A double room starts at around £47pppn. Tel: +385/23/20 66 36. [www.falkensteiner.com/en/hotel/borik/summary.htm](http://www.falkensteiner.com/en/hotel/borik/summary.htm)



When your ship comes in: Top DJs entertain on The Garden Festival's twice-daily boat parties

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