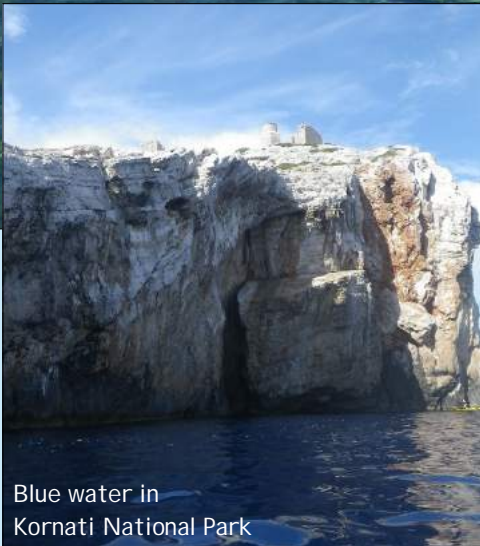


KAYAKING IN CROATIA AND THE CANALS OF VENICE

By Sue Hughes



Blue water in
Kornati National Park

There weren't many birds or the abundant marine life we have in the Pacific Northwest, but the water was amazing colors, and calm and warm.

The kayaking was fun but I liked the mountain parks with good hiking even more. Two of the parks are national treasures with hundreds of waterfalls dropping over limestone and travertine ledges.



Krka National Park; even more amazing are the Plitvice waterfalls

VENICE: The city is notoriously full of tourists, but if you enjoy just wandering around and getting lost, and if you visit the main piazzas after dark, it's still magical. One of the days we were there we went kayaking; we took the 4.1 vaporetto from the Canal Grande to La Certosa, an island northeast of the city. The company we used, Venice Kayak, was highly recommended, although our guide wasn't as personable or knowledgeable as the rave reviews on TripAdvisor led me to expect.

We paddled back toward the city, but did not go into the iconic canals that are the Venice many people imagine. We spent most of our time on narrow working-class residential waterways with the motor boats venezianos use as cars or trucks parked by their doorways.

There weren't any gondolas on those backways but we saw ancient churches, the goony lions at the Arsenale that Donna Leon mentioned in *Doctored Evidence* and my favorite, laundry flapping over the water on lines strung between apartments that were centuries old.



The Arsenale was Venice's shipyard during the city's international trading heyday.



Greek lion, dated 6th century BC, stolen by the Venetians from Delos



Anna and Sue Hughes

